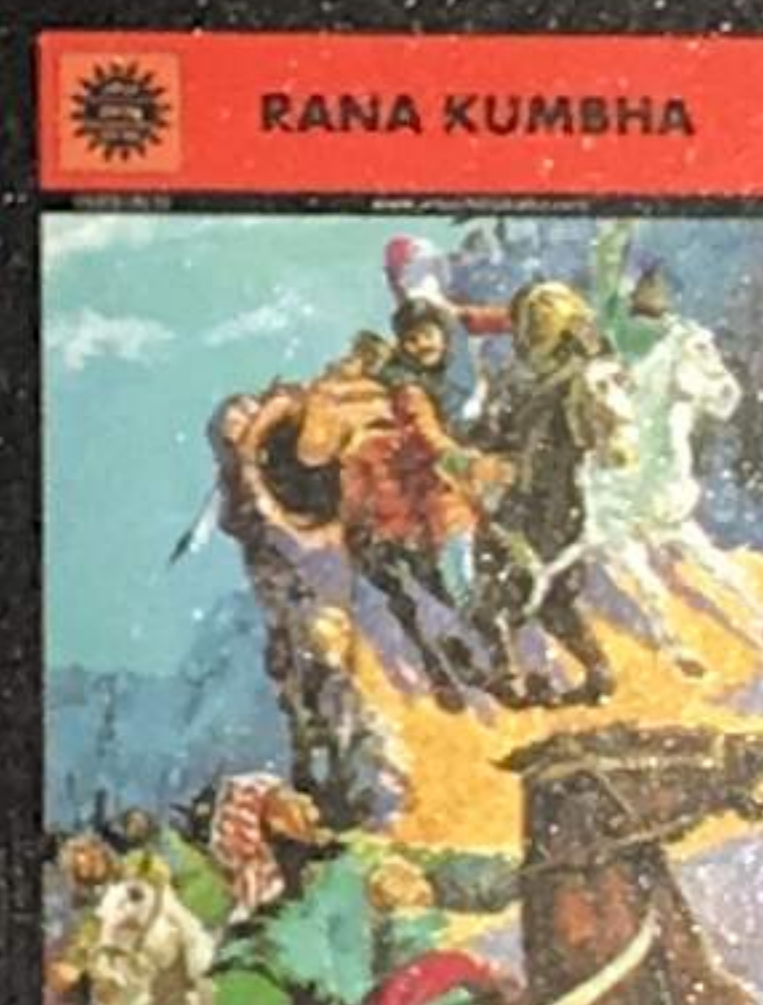
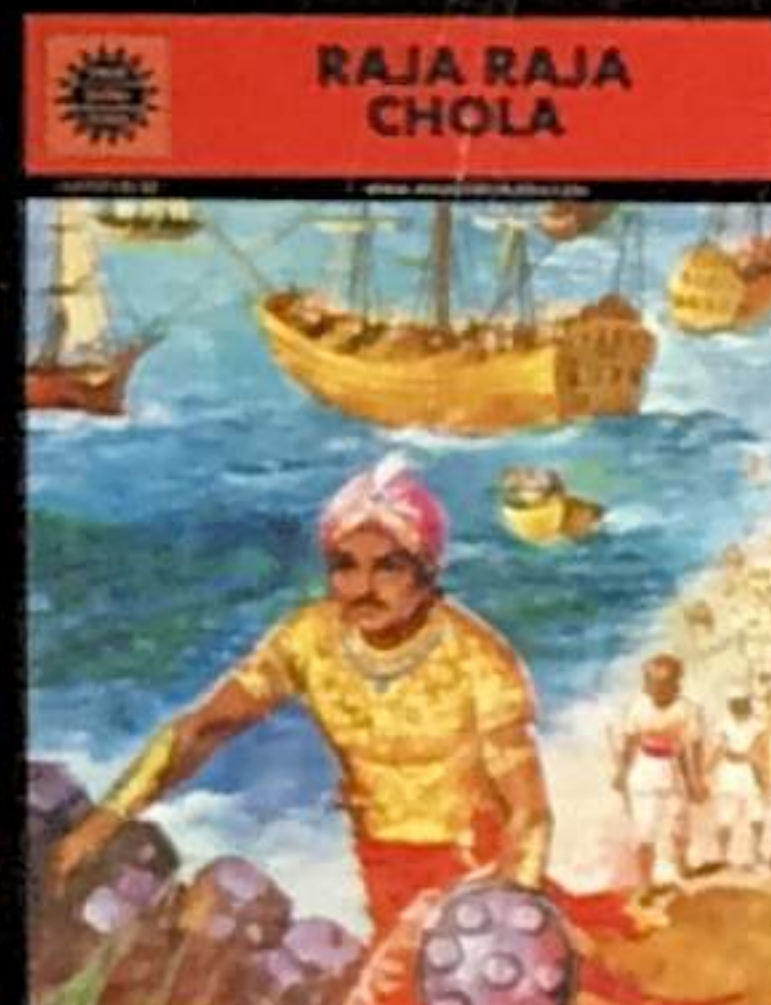


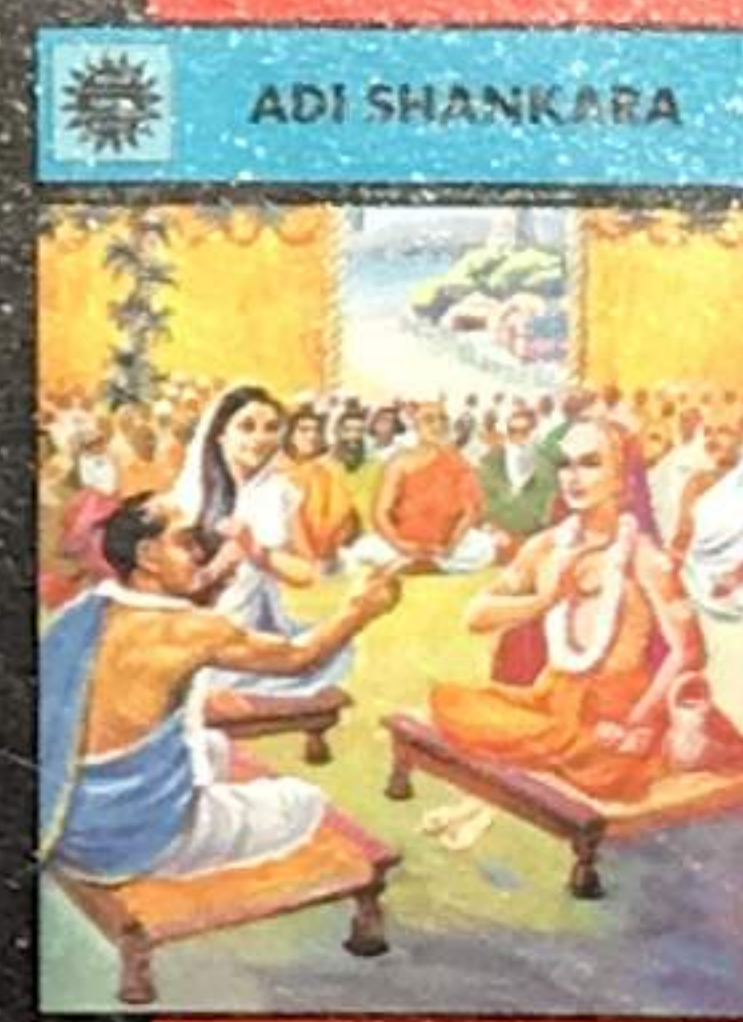
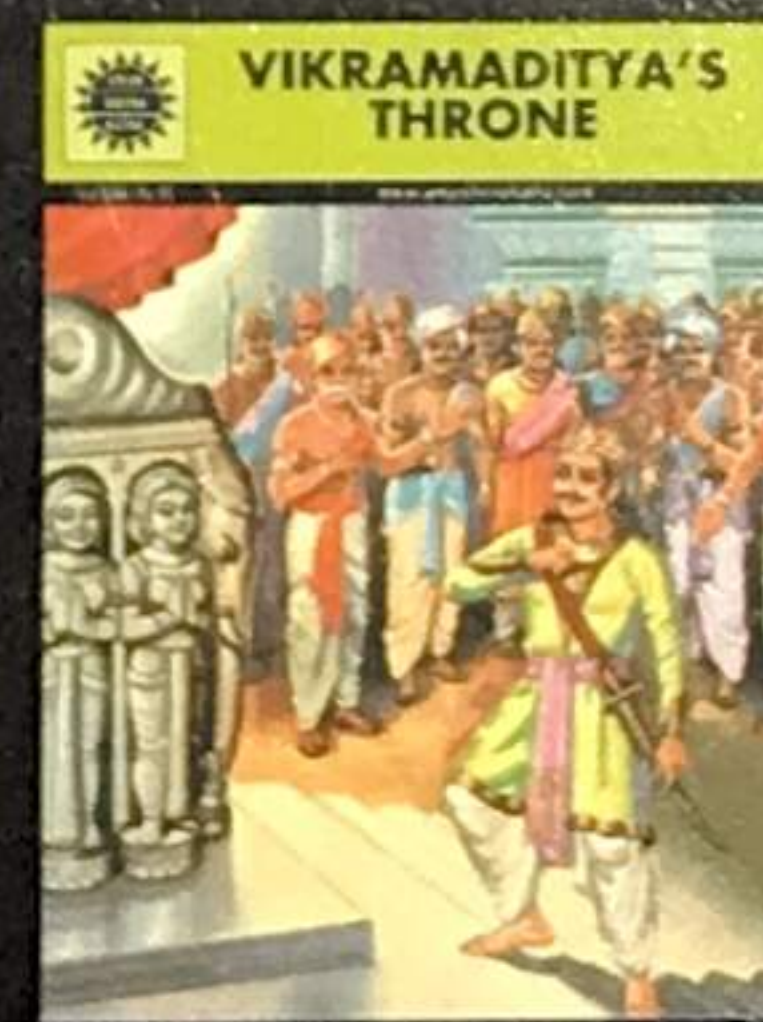
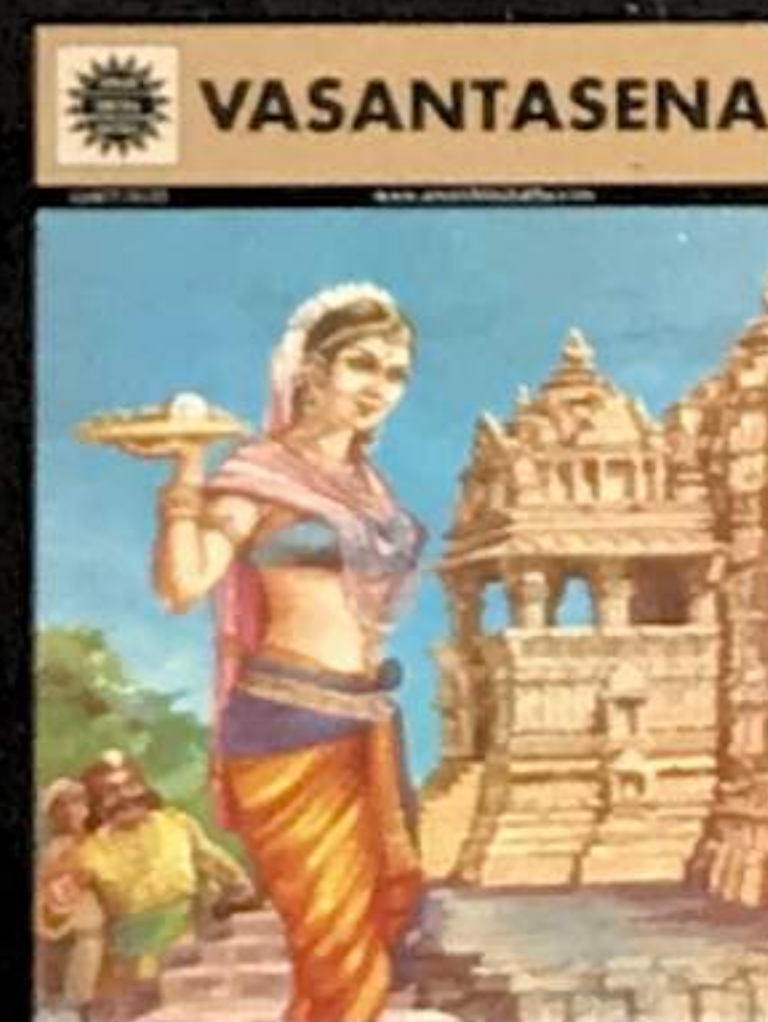
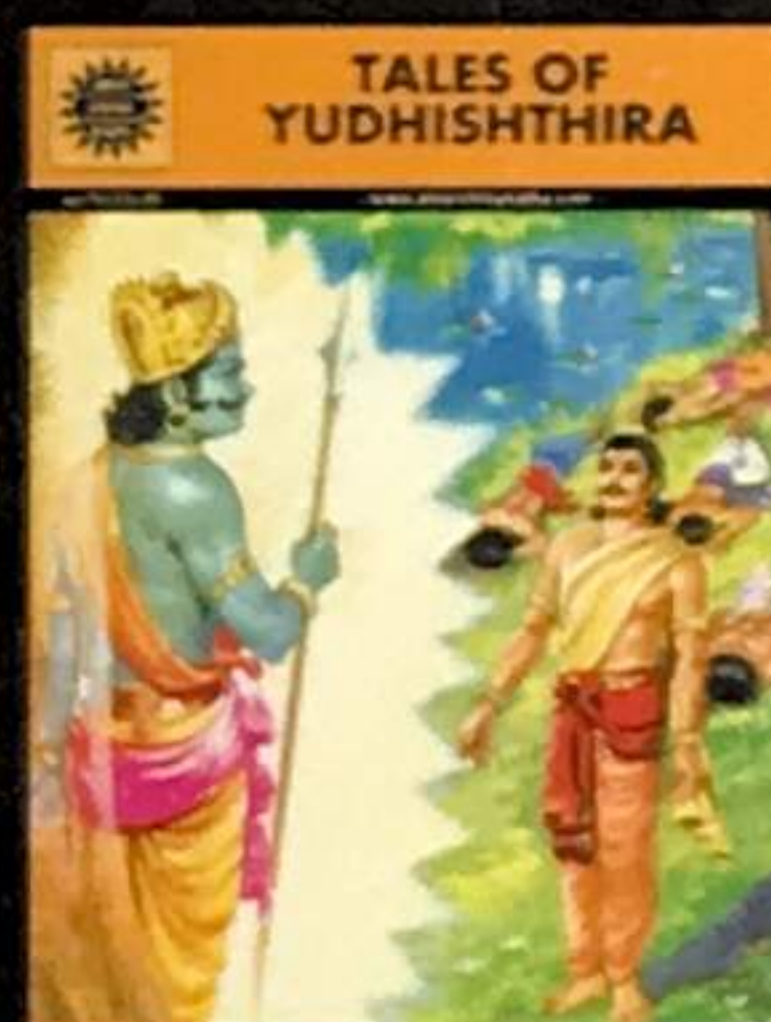
ELLORA CAVES

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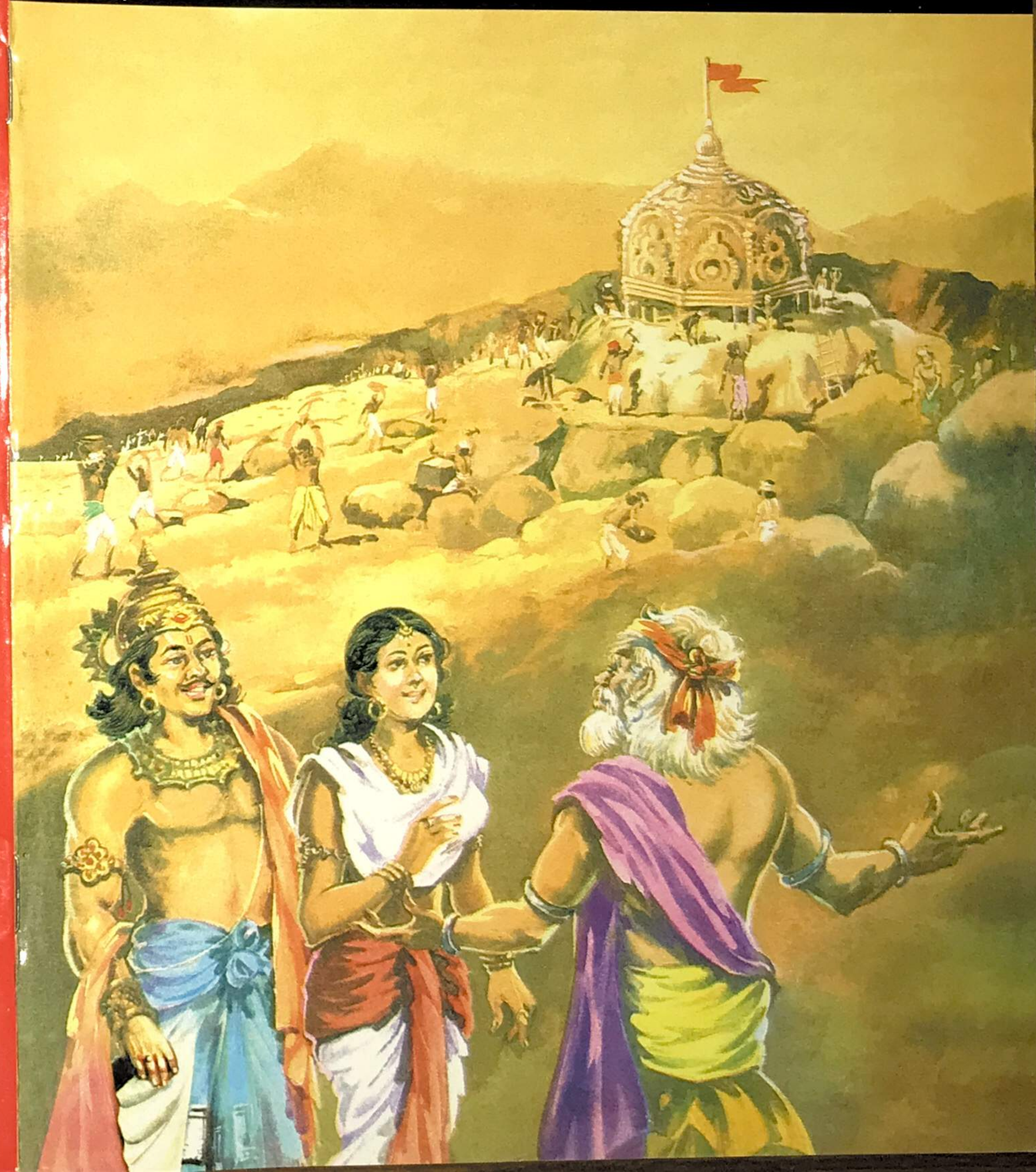
BRAVEHEARTS



ELLORA CAVES

THE GLORY OF THE RASHTRAKOOTAS

Vol 731 | ₹50



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The Glory of the Rashtrakootas

IN THE 8TH CENTURY A.D. A NEW EMPIRE WAS ABOUT TO RISE IN CENTRAL INDIA. INDRA, THE RULER OF ELLICHPUR PRINCIPALITY OF THE CHALUKYAN EMPIRE, NURSED AMBITIONS OF EXTENDING THE AREA OF HIS INFLUENCE.

OUR FOREFATHERS EMIGRATED TO ELLICHPUR SEVERAL GENERATIONS AGO AND CARVED A PRINCIPALITY FOR THEMSELVES HERE.



... A KINGDOM SHOULD GROW.



... BUT TO GROW I NEED SUPPORT. I MUST HAVE STRONG ALLIES.

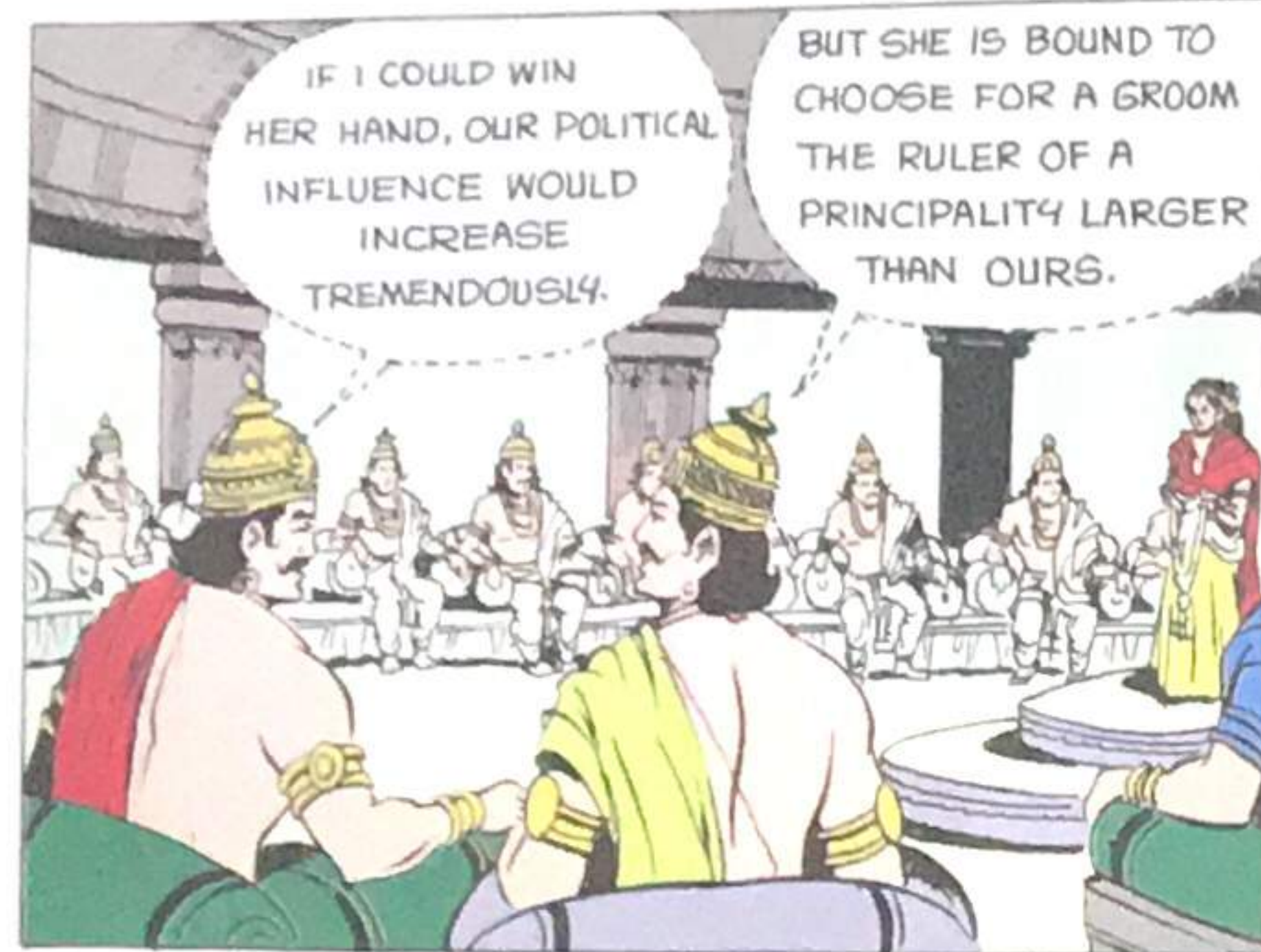


SO WHEN THE WEDDING OF CHALUKYA KING PULAKESHI'S DAUGHTER WAS ARRANGED —

KRISHNA, PRINCESS BHAVANAGA IS GOING TO SELECT HER HUSBAND TODAY.

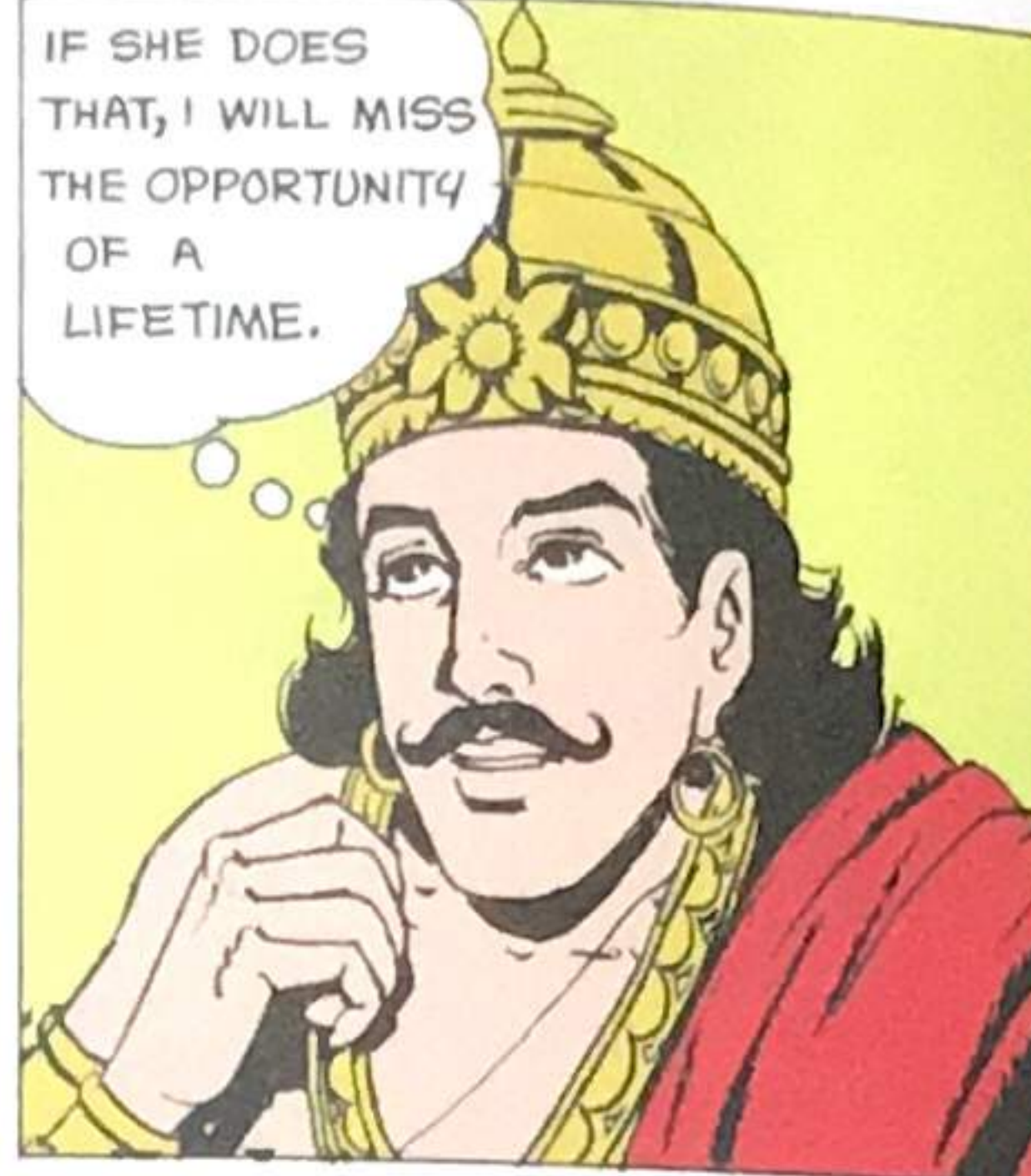
YES, BROTHER.





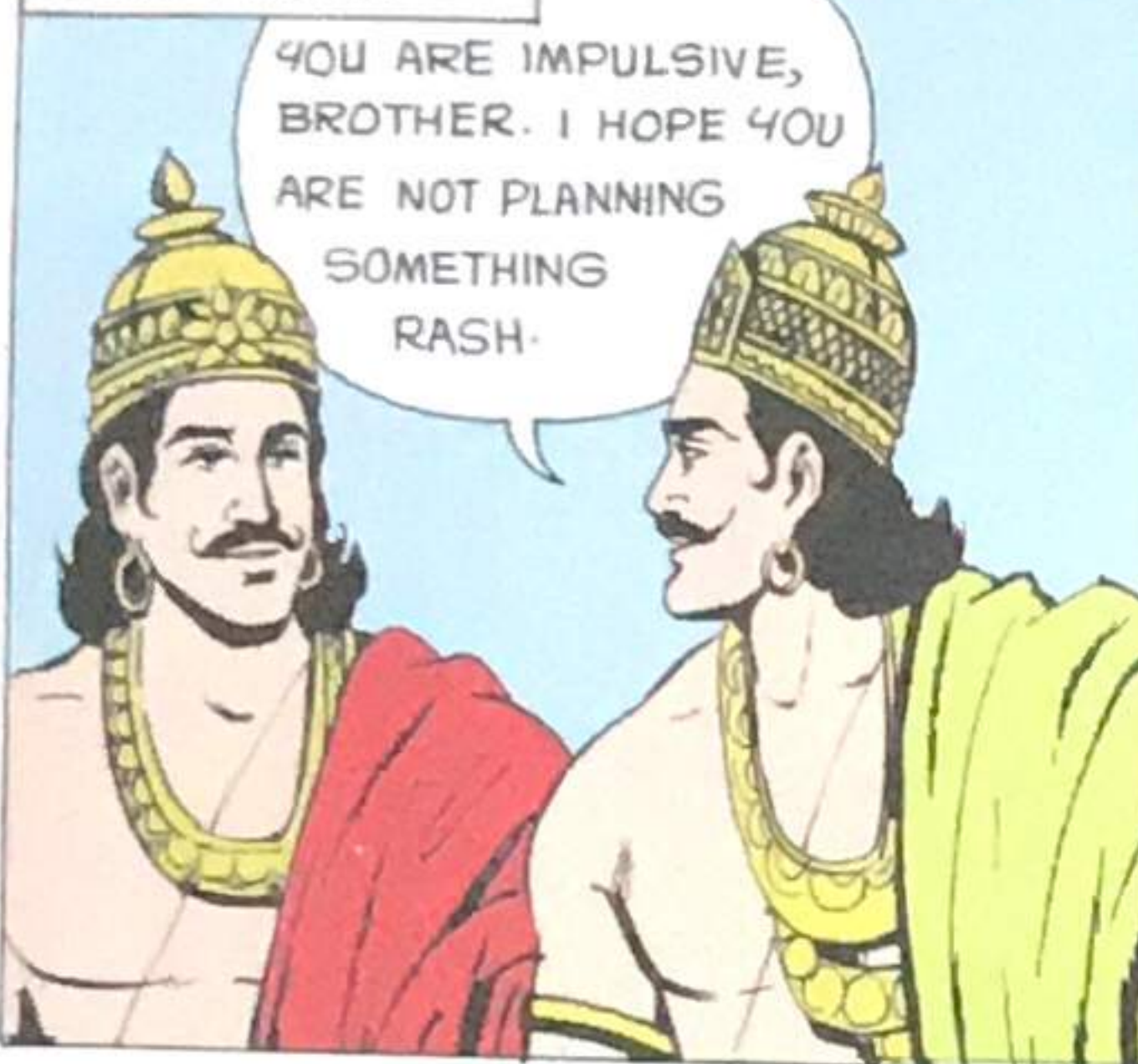
IF I COULD WIN HER HAND, OUR POLITICAL INFLUENCE WOULD INCREASE TREMENDOUSLY.

BUT SHE IS BOUND TO CHOOSE FOR A GROOM THE RULER OF A PRINCIPALITY LARGER THAN OURS.



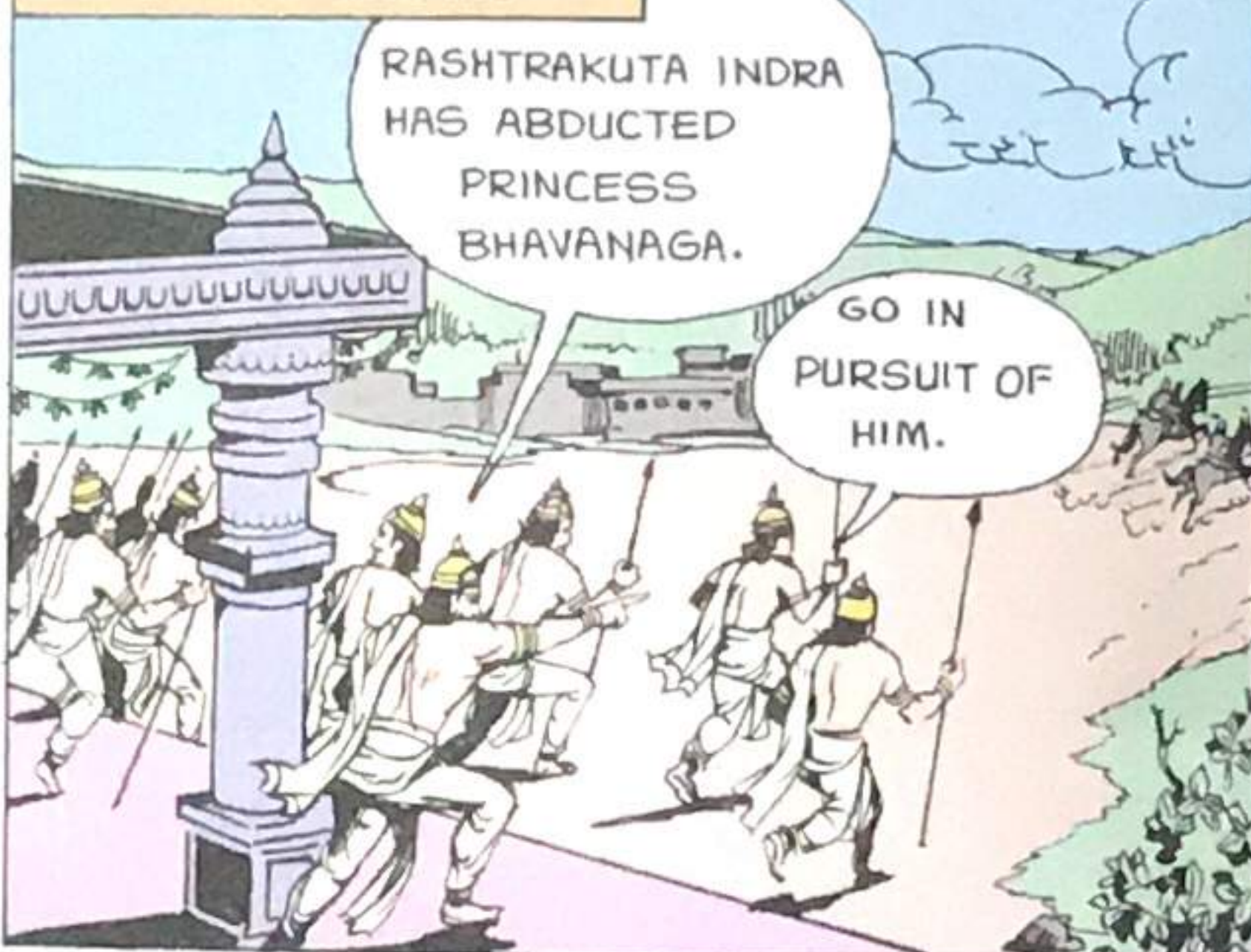
IF SHE DOES THAT, I WILL MISS THE OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME.

KRISHNA NOTICED A STRANGE TINKLE IN INDRA'S EYES —



YOU ARE IMPULSIVE, BROTHER. I HOPE YOU ARE NOT PLANNING SOMETHING RASH.

INDRA WAS PLANNING PRECISELY THAT. SO ON THE DAY OF THE WEDDING —



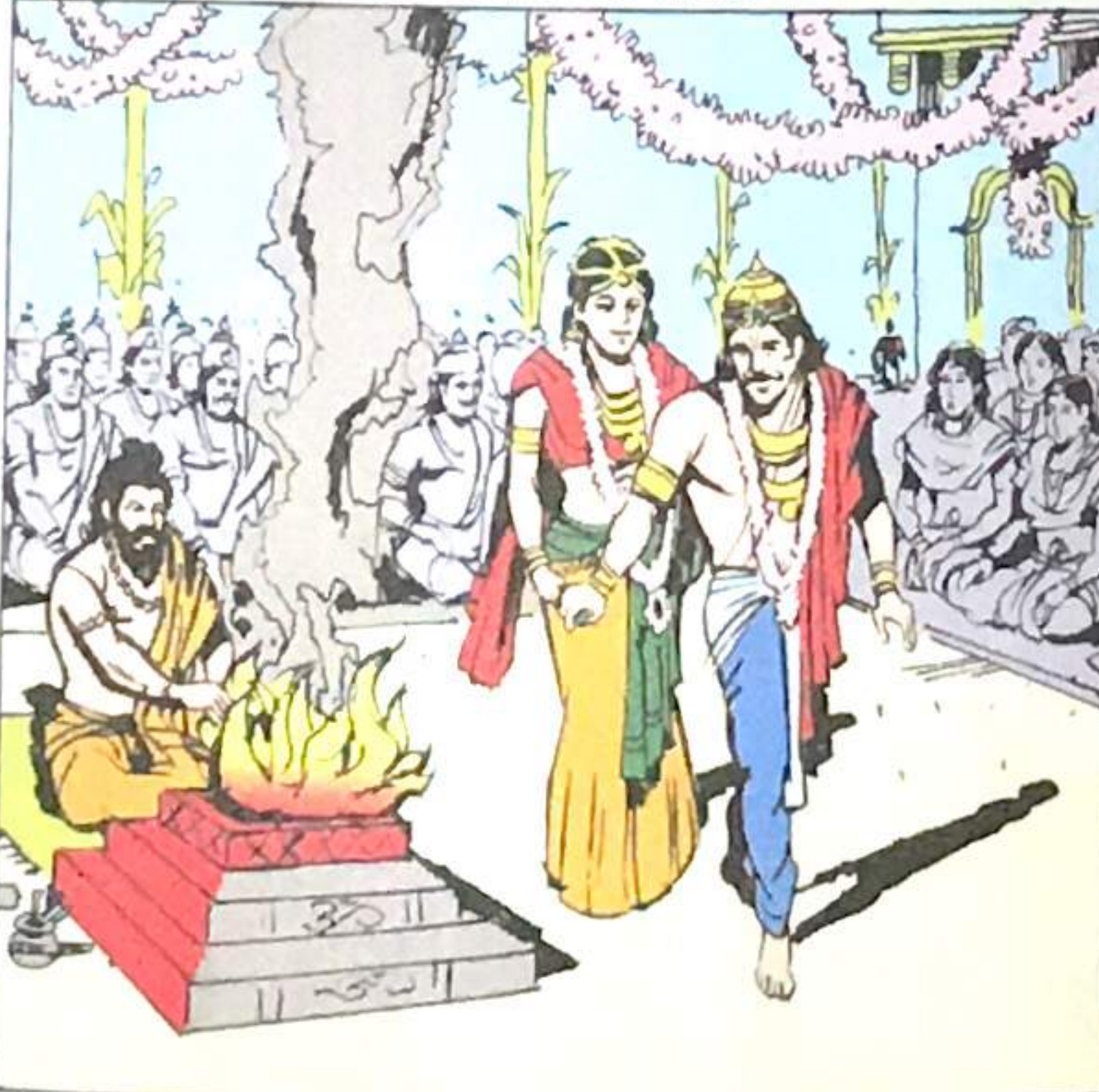
RASHTRAKUTA INDRA HAS ABDUCTED PRINCESS BHAVANAGA.

GO IN PURSUIT OF HIM.

BUT INDRA MANAGED TO REACH ELLICHPUR SAFELY WITH HIS ABDUCTED BRIDE...



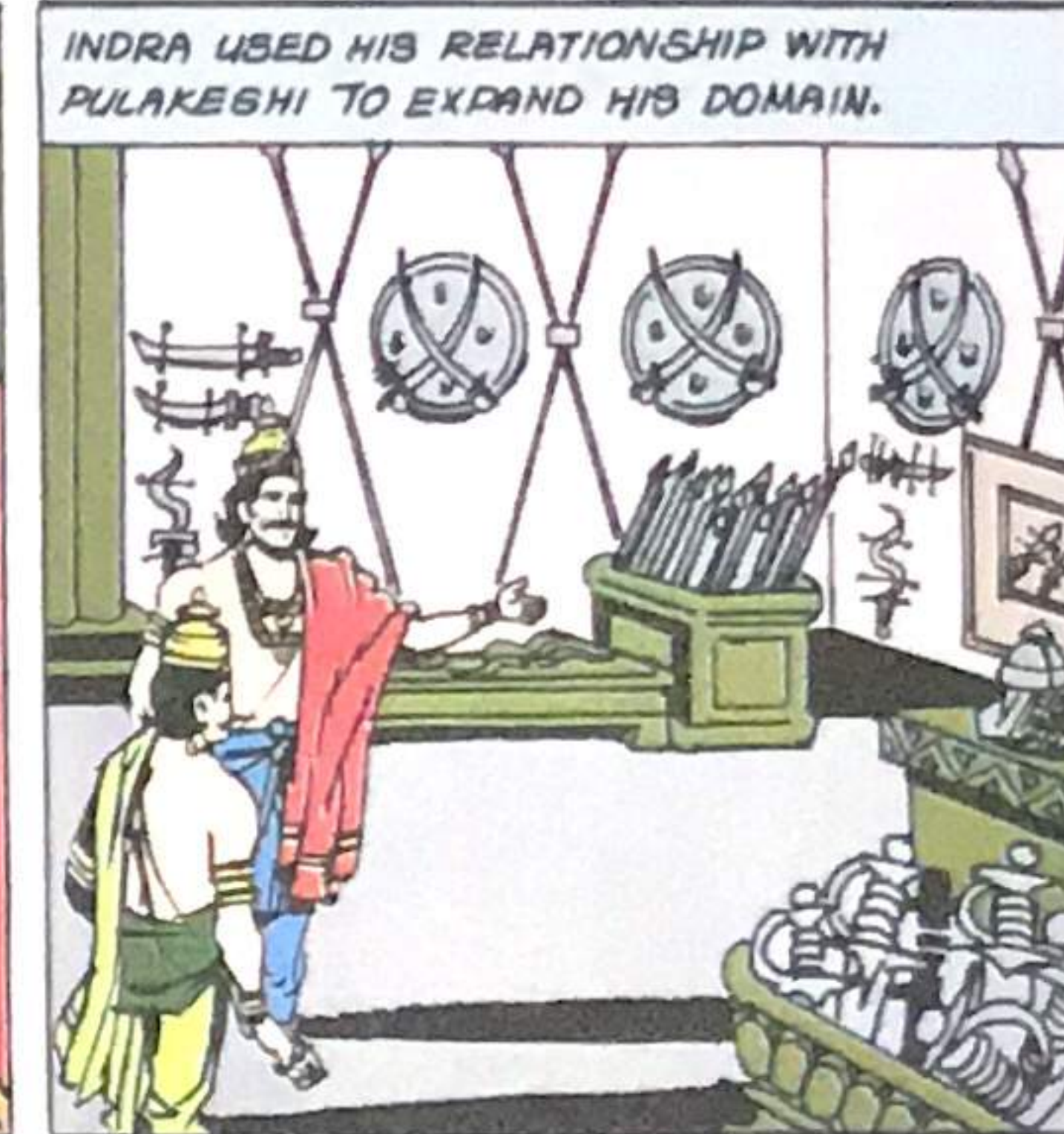
... AND THERE HE MARRIED HER.



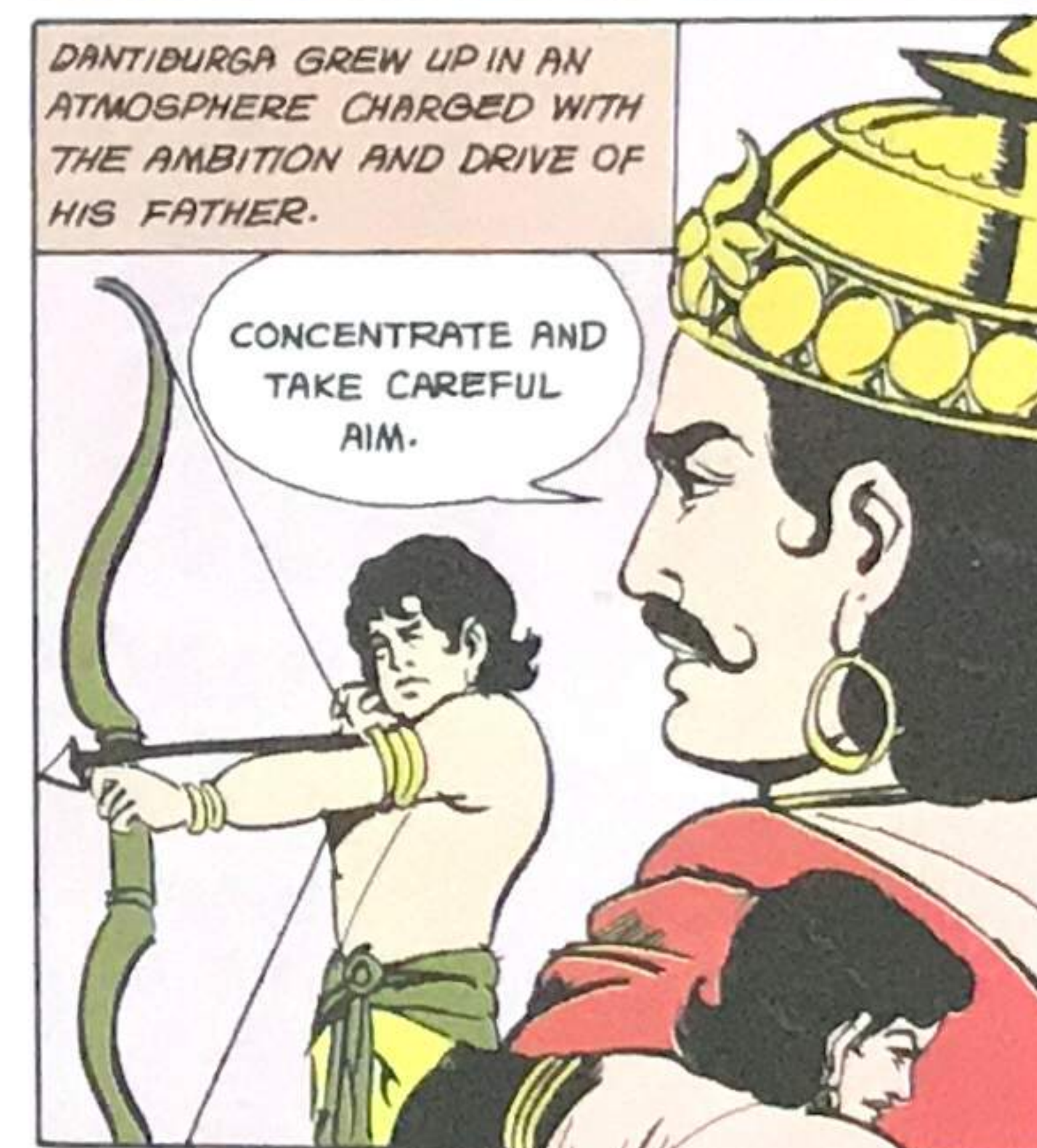
PULAKESHI WAS VERY ANGRY WITH INDRA. BUT THEIR RELATIONS BECAME FRIENDLY BY THE TIME INDRA AND BHAVANAGA'S FIRST SON DANTIDURGA WAS BORN.



YOUR FATHER HAS SENT HIS GRANDSON FABULOUS GIFTS.

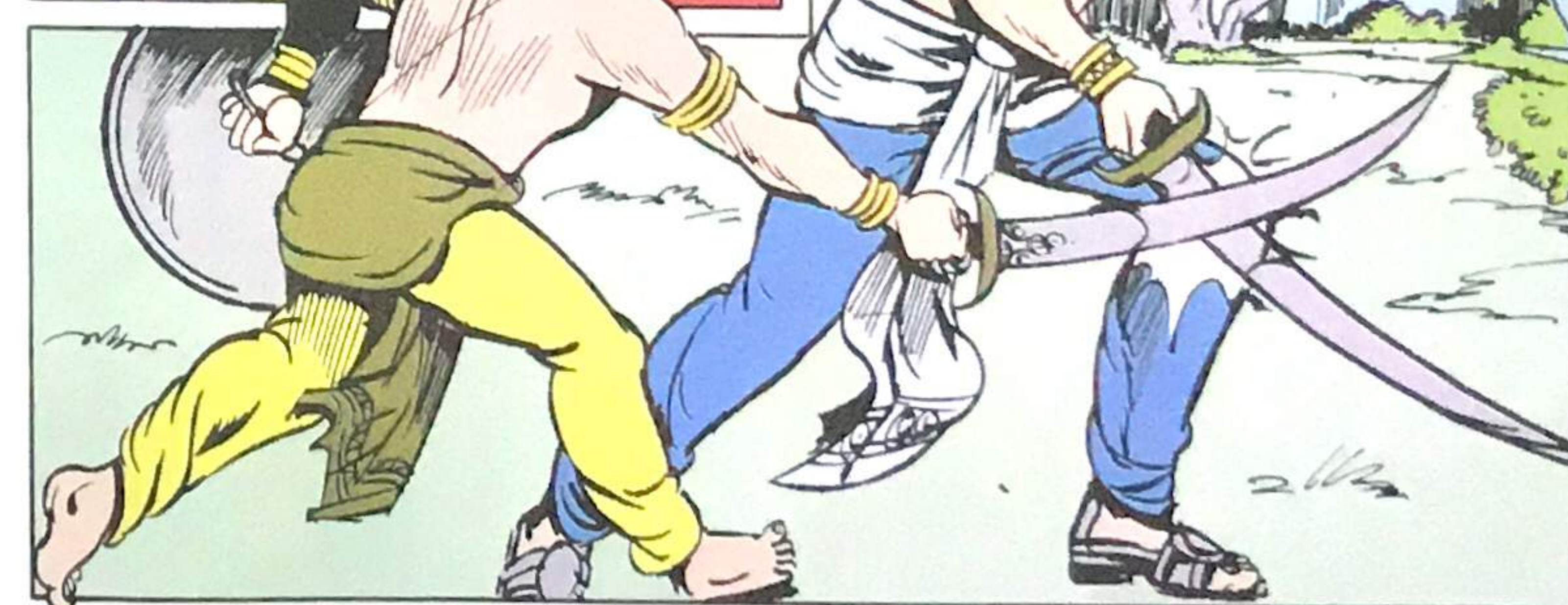


INDRA USED HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH PULAKESHI TO EXPAND HIS DOMAIN.



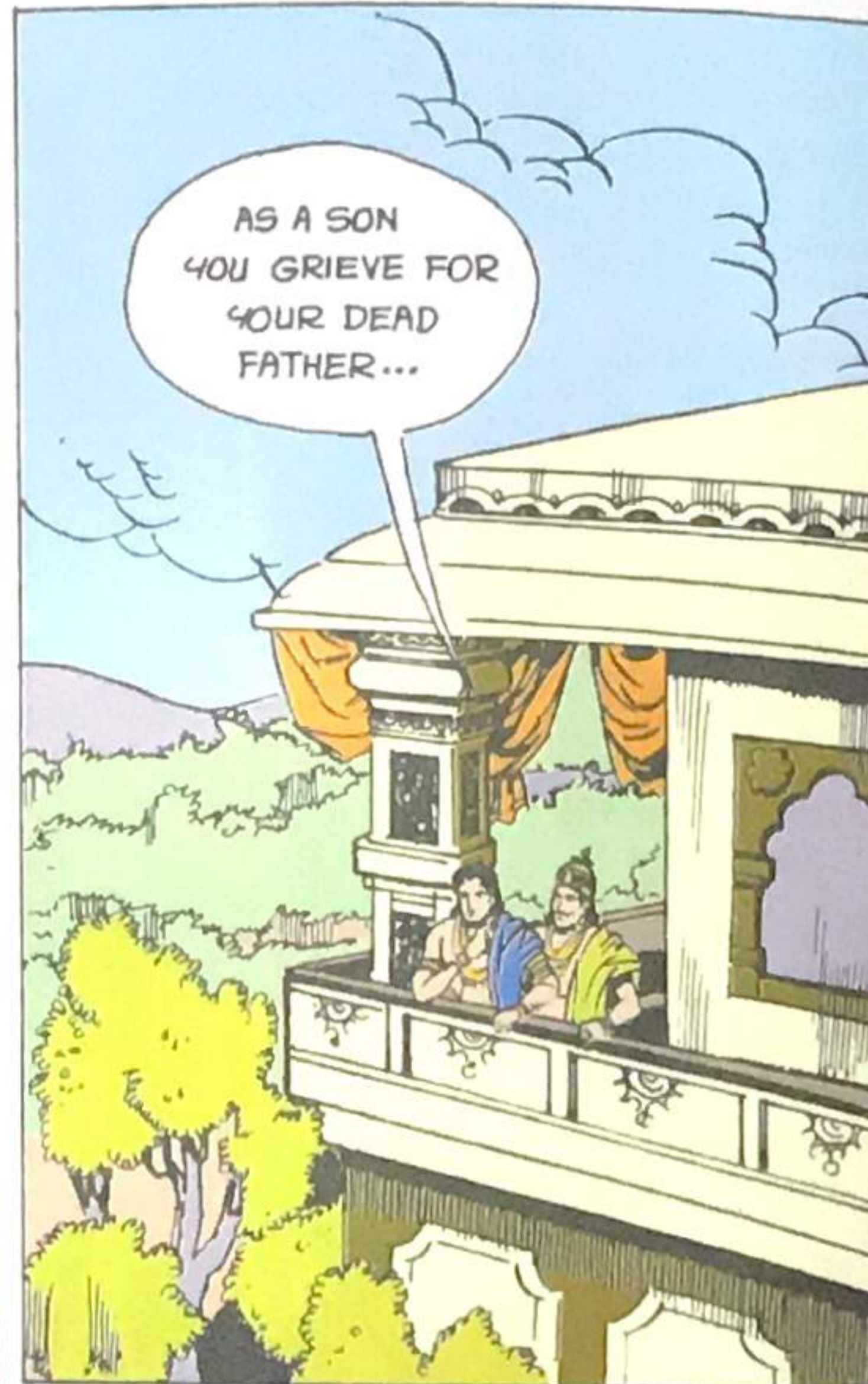
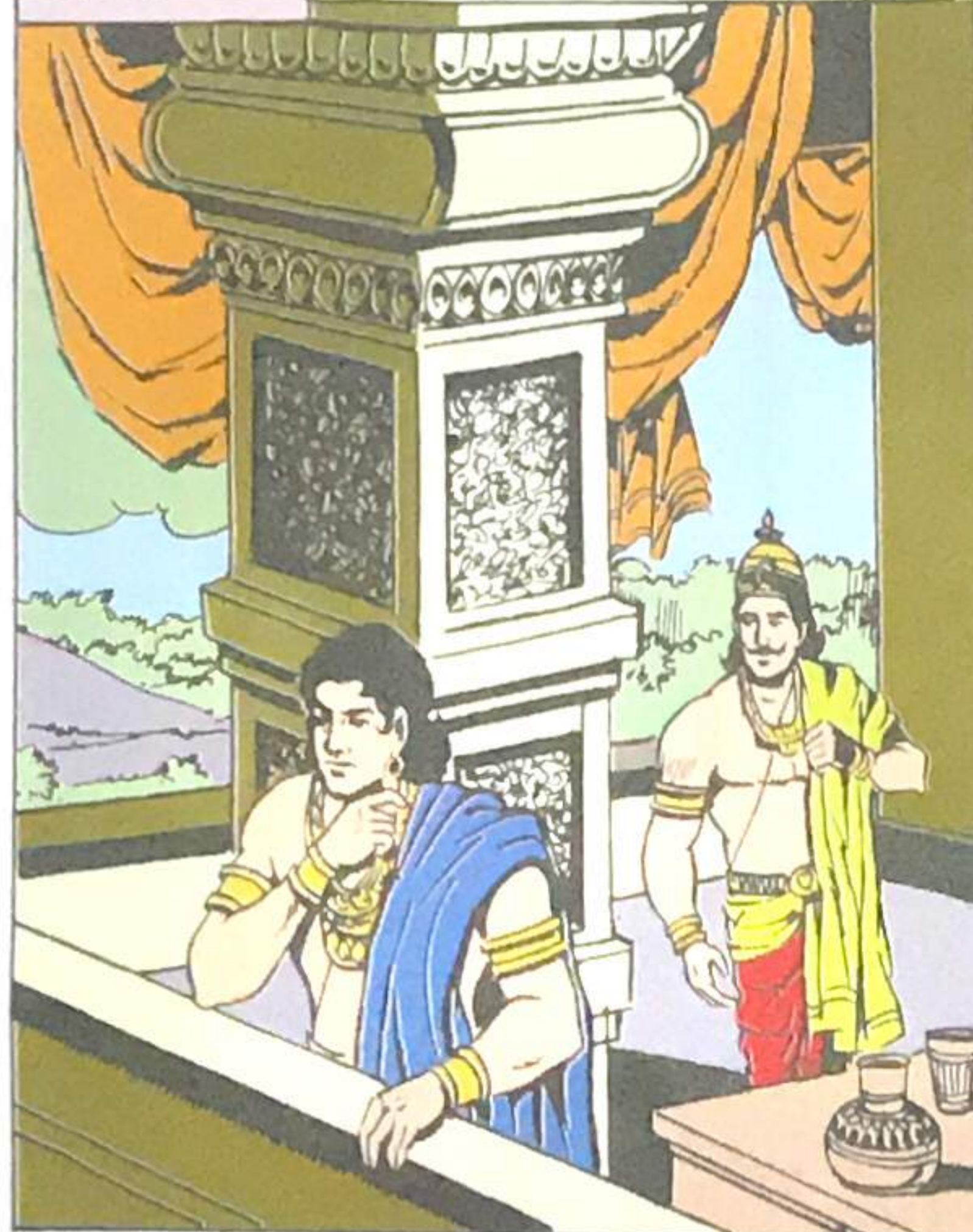
DANTIDURGA GREW UP IN AN ATMOSPHERE CHARGED WITH THE AMBITION AND DRIVE OF HIS FATHER.

CONCENTRATE AND TAKE CAREFUL AIM.

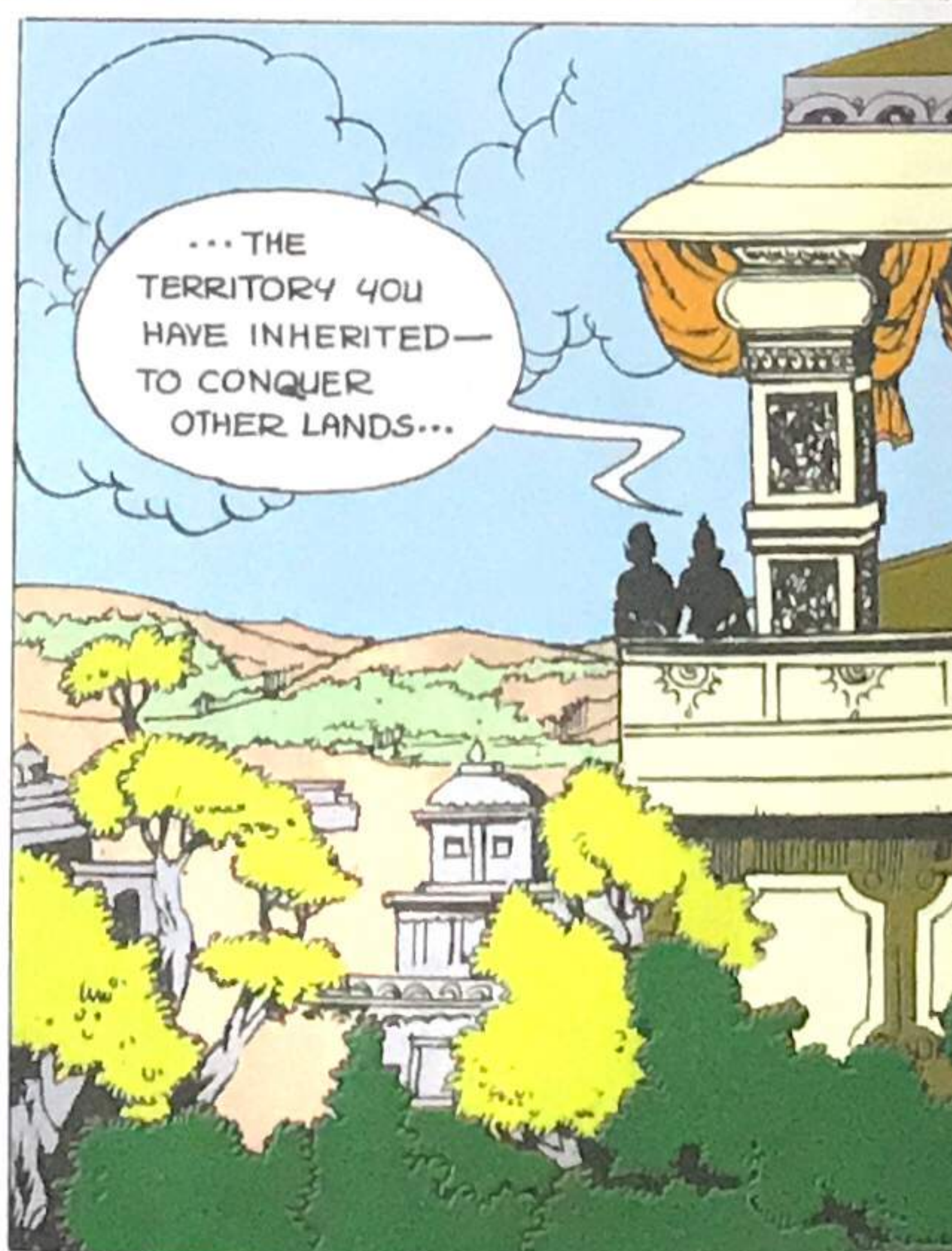


YOU MUST TRAIN YOURSELF TO BE A GOOD SOLDIER. ONLY A GOOD SOLDIER CAN BE A GOOD GENERAL.

IN A.D. 733, INDRA DIED LEAVING BEHIND HIS BROTHER KRISHNA AND HIS ONLY SON DANTIDURGA.

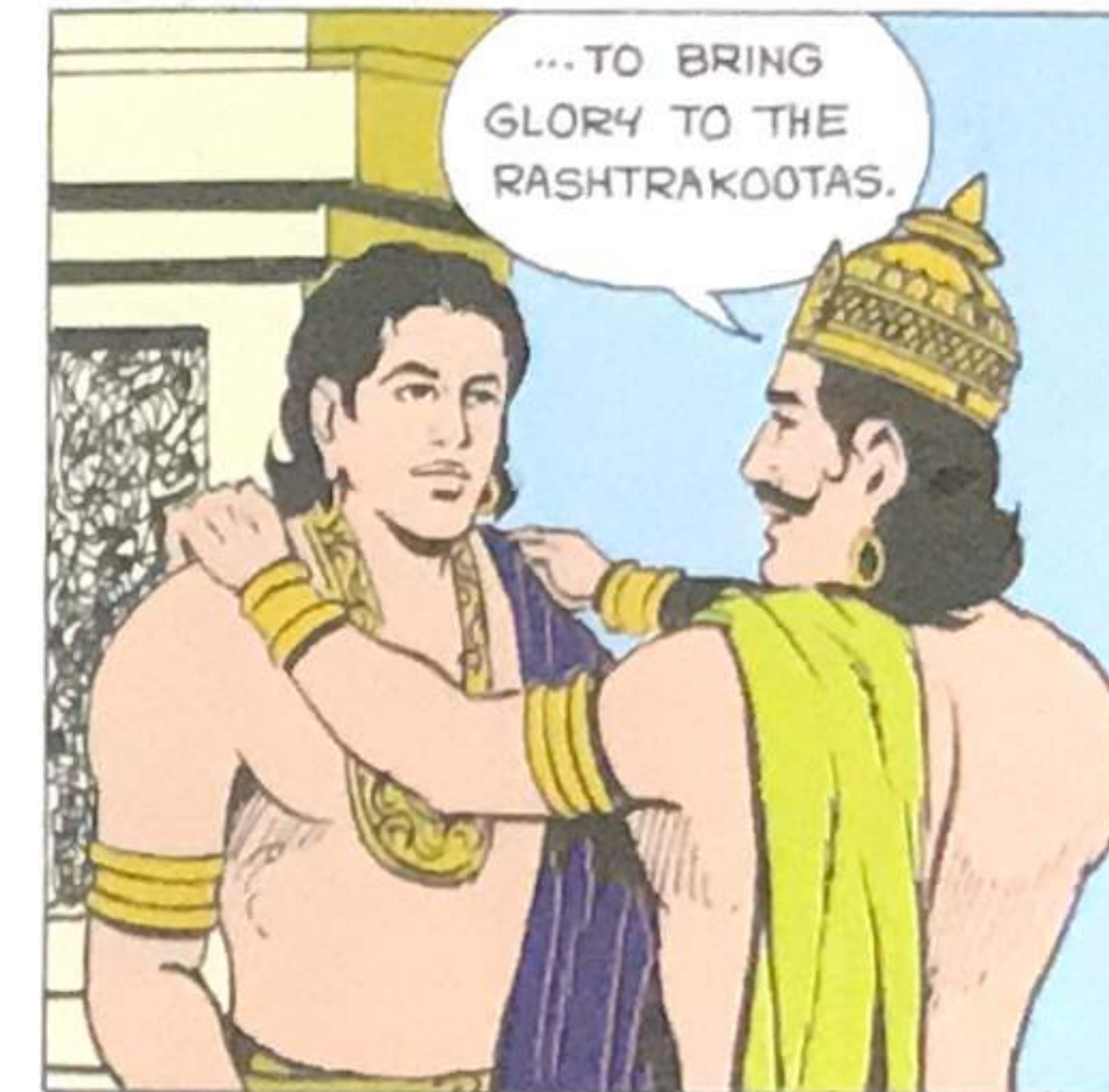


AS A SON
YOU GRIEVE FOR
YOUR DEAD
FATHER...



...THE
TERRITORY YOU
HAVE INHERITED—
TO CONQUER
OTHER LANDS...

...AS THE
YUVARAJA, YOU HAVE
TO STEEL YOURSELF
AGAINST SORROW SO
AS TO RULE...

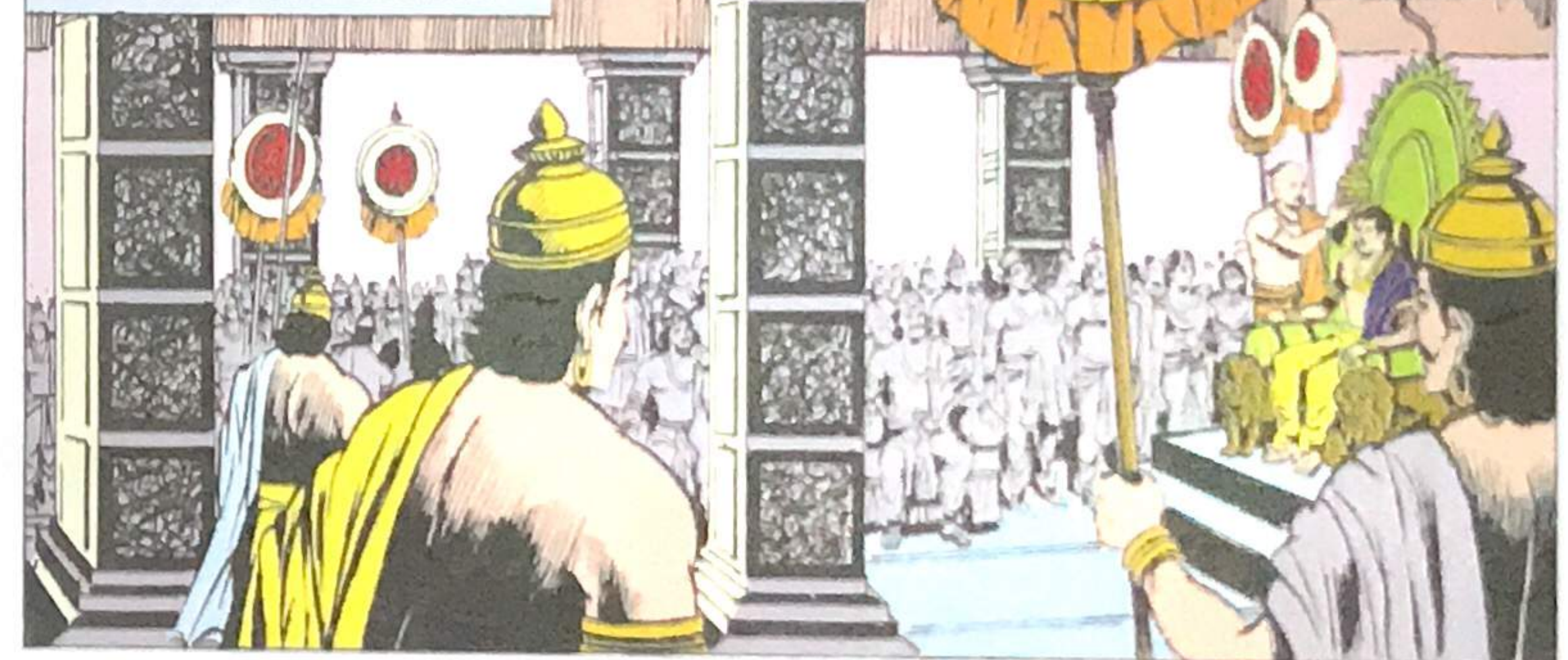


...TO BRING
GLORY TO THE
RASHTRAKOOTAS.



YES, UNCLE. I
WILL STRIVE HARD
TO BRING GLORY
TO THE
RASHTRAKOOTAS.

ON THE FOLLOWING DAY
DANTIDURGA WAS CROWNED.



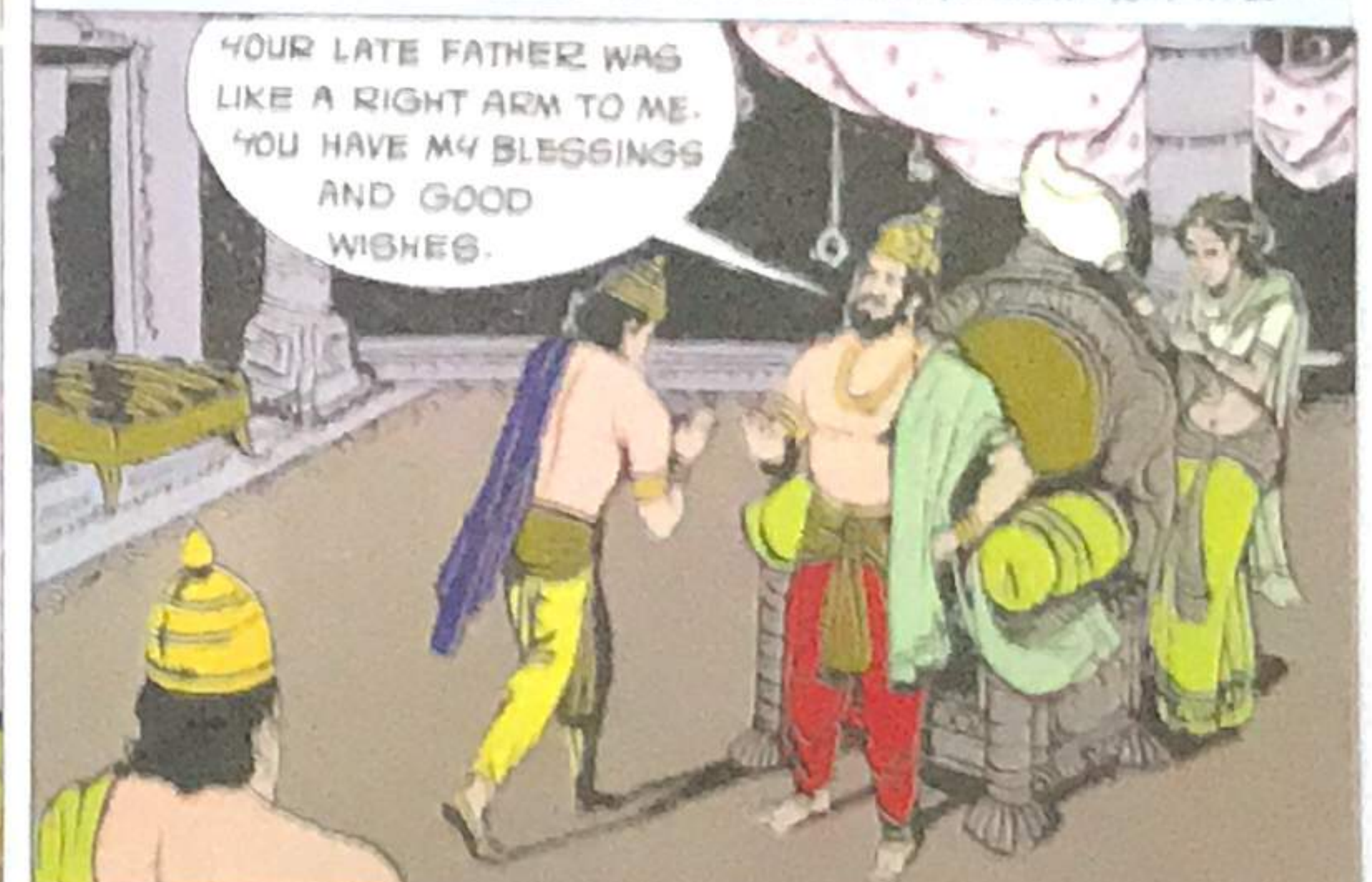
RASHTRAKOOTAS WERE STILL
VASSALS OF THE CHALUKYAN
EMPEROR.

NOW YOU HAVE TO
MAKE A JOURNEY TO
BADAMI AND PAY
YOUR RESPECT
TO THE
EMPEROR.



I WILL,
UNCLE.

WHEN DANTIDURGA CALLED ON THE EMPEROR, VIKRAMADITYA II —



YOUR LATE FATHER WAS
LIKE A RIGHT ARM TO ME.
YOU HAVE MY BLESSINGS
AND GOOD
WISHES.

IN A.D. 738, DANTIDURGA RECEIVED A MESSAGE FROM THE EMPEROR—

THE ARABS ARE HARASSING PULAKESHI OF GUJARAT. PROCEED FORTHWITH TO HIS AID.

I WILL MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CAMPAIGN IMMEDIATELY.

ALSO, SEND PULAKESHI A MESSAGE THAT WE ARE ON OUR WAY.

THE EMPEROR WAS SUPPOSED TO SEND US HELP. I HOPE IT ARRIVES IN TIME.

AT NAVASARI, PULAKESHI WAS FIGHTING A LOSING BATTLE WITH THE ARAB INVADERS.

THE ENEMY IS TOO STRONG FOR US. WE CANNOT HOLD OUT MUCH LONGER, SIRE.

MAHARAJ, A MESSENGER HAS JUST ARRIVED FROM ELLICHPUR.

BRING HIM IMMEDIATELY.

OH, THAT'S EXCELLENT NEWS.

MAHARAJ, DANTIDURGA IS ON HIS WAY. HE PLANS TO ATTACK THE ARABS FROM BEHIND AND SURPRISE THEM.

WHILE PULAKESHI FOUGHT WITH RENEWED ZEAL, DANTIDURGA LED A DETERMINED ATTACK FROM THE OPPOSITE END—

CHARGE!

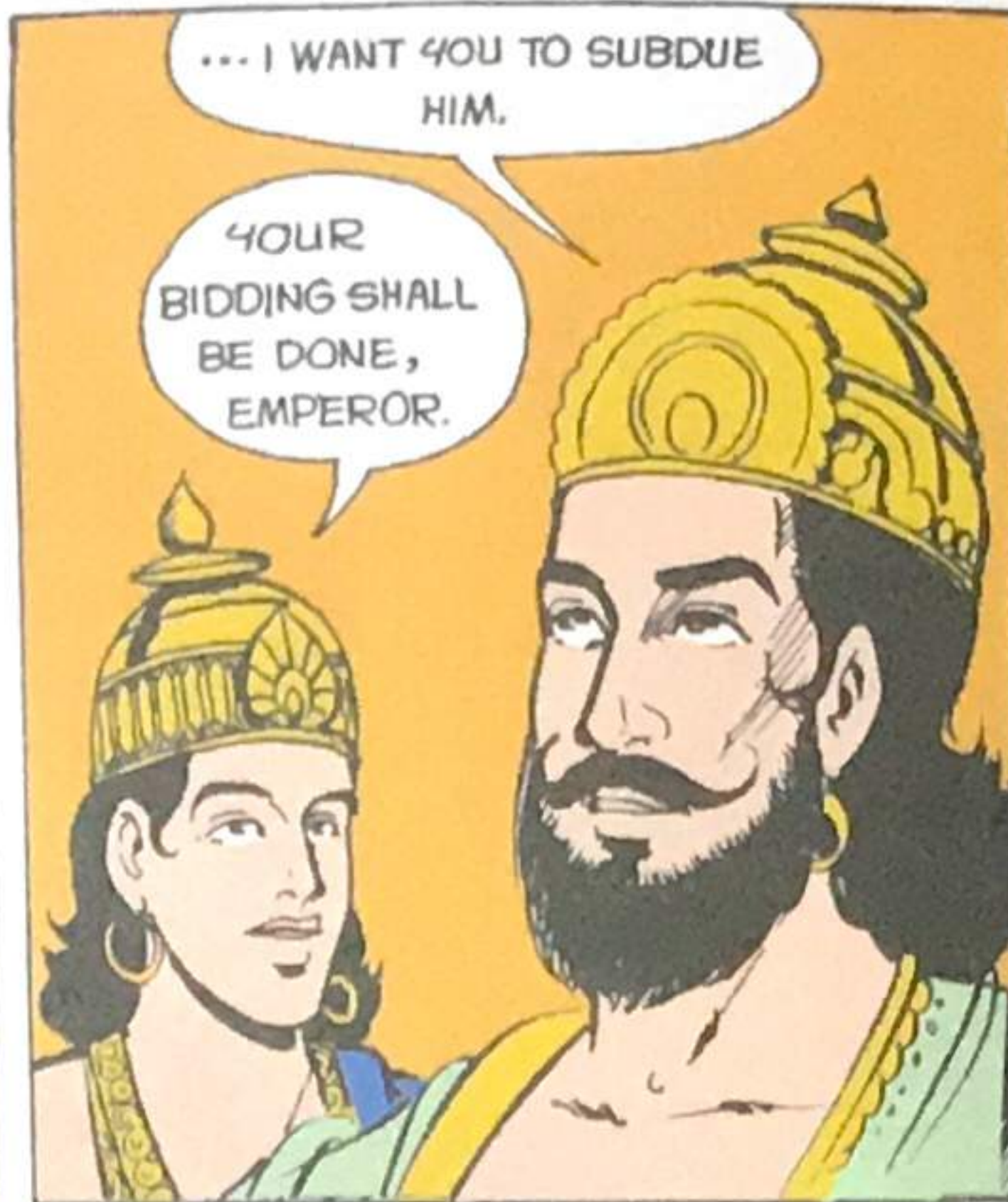
A FIERCE BATTLE ENSUED.

THE ARABS WERE SOON ROUTED.

THE EMPEROR, VIKRAMADITYA II, HONoured THE VICTORIOUS KINGS—

DANTIDURGA OF ELLICHPUR, I CONFER ON YOU THE TITLES PRITHVIVALLABHA* AND KHADGAVALOKA†.

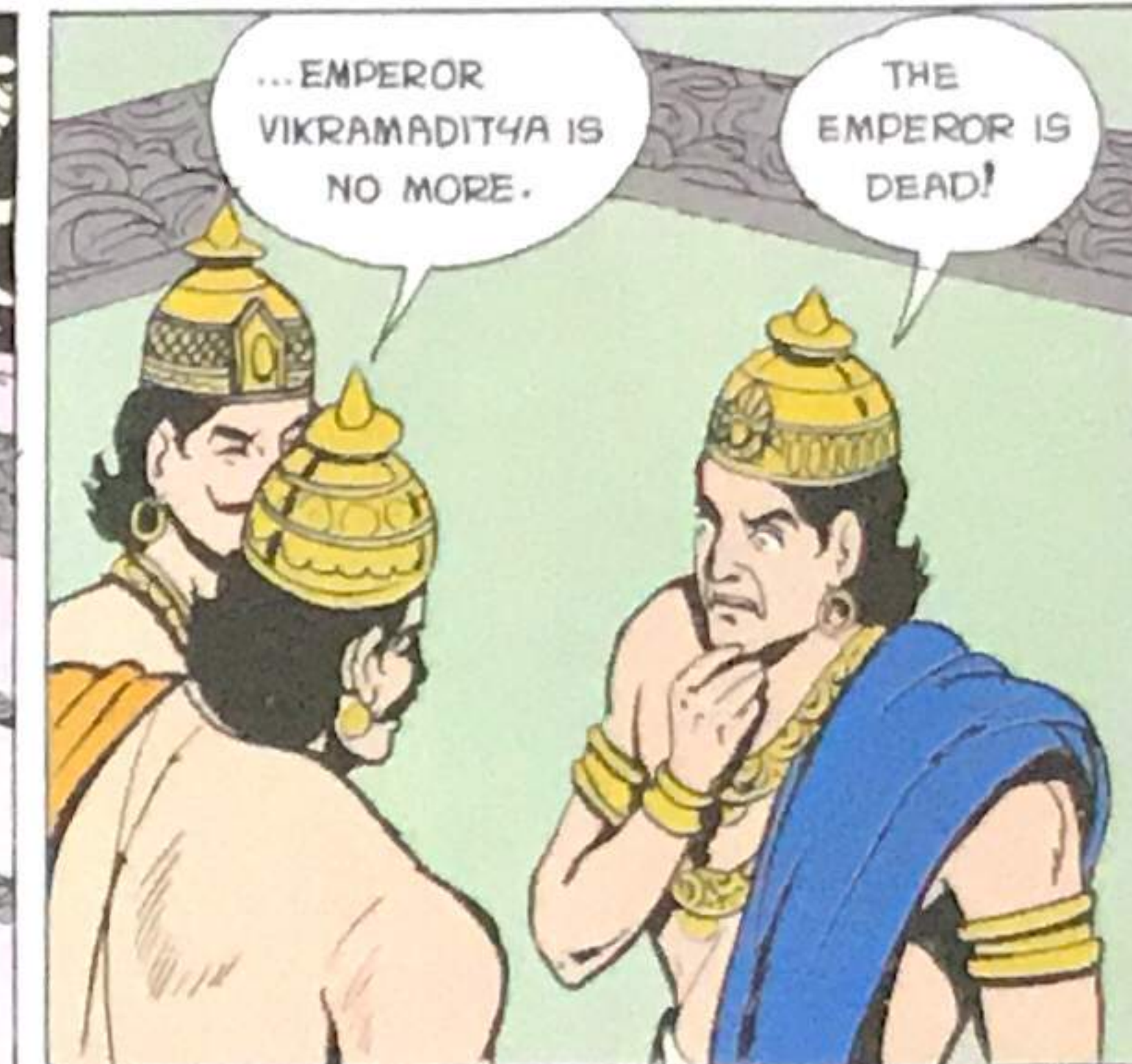
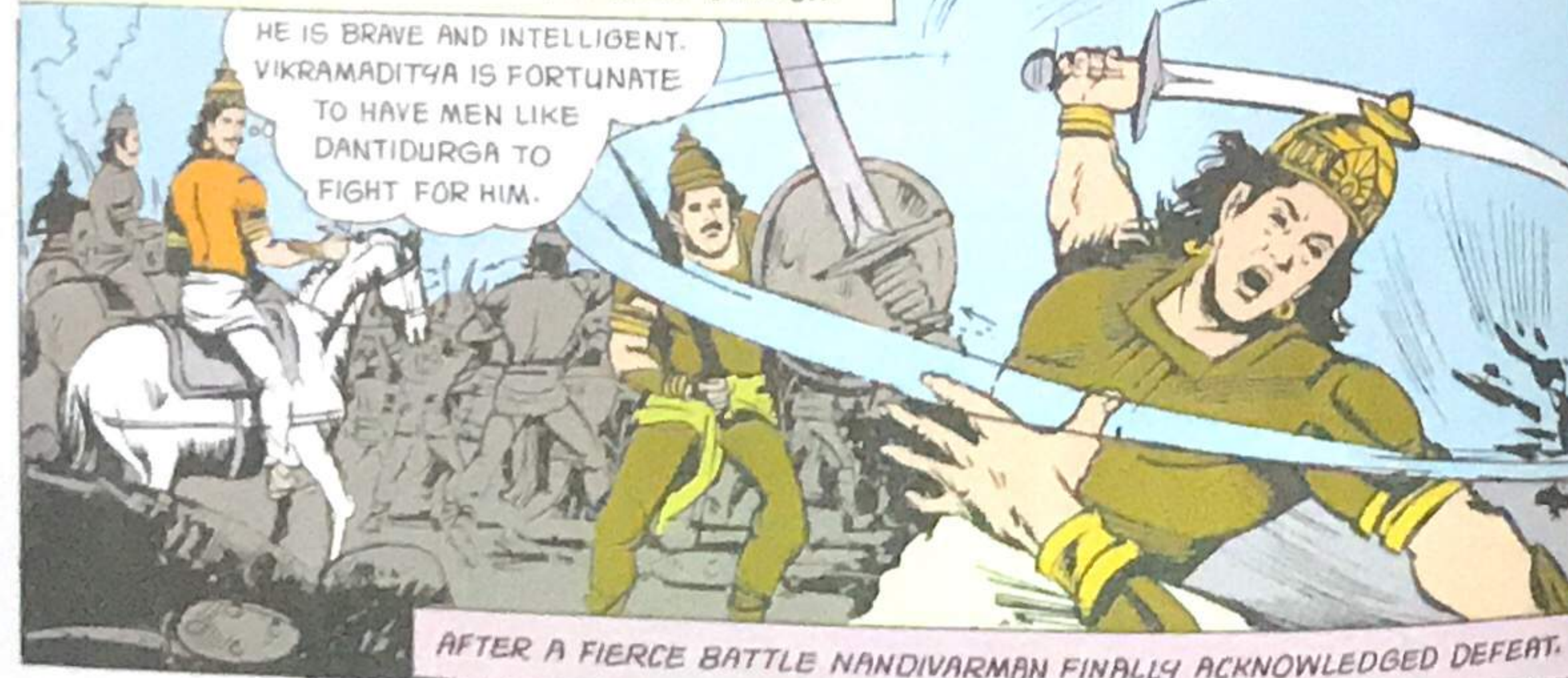
* HERO OF THE WORLD † VALOROUS SWORDSMAN



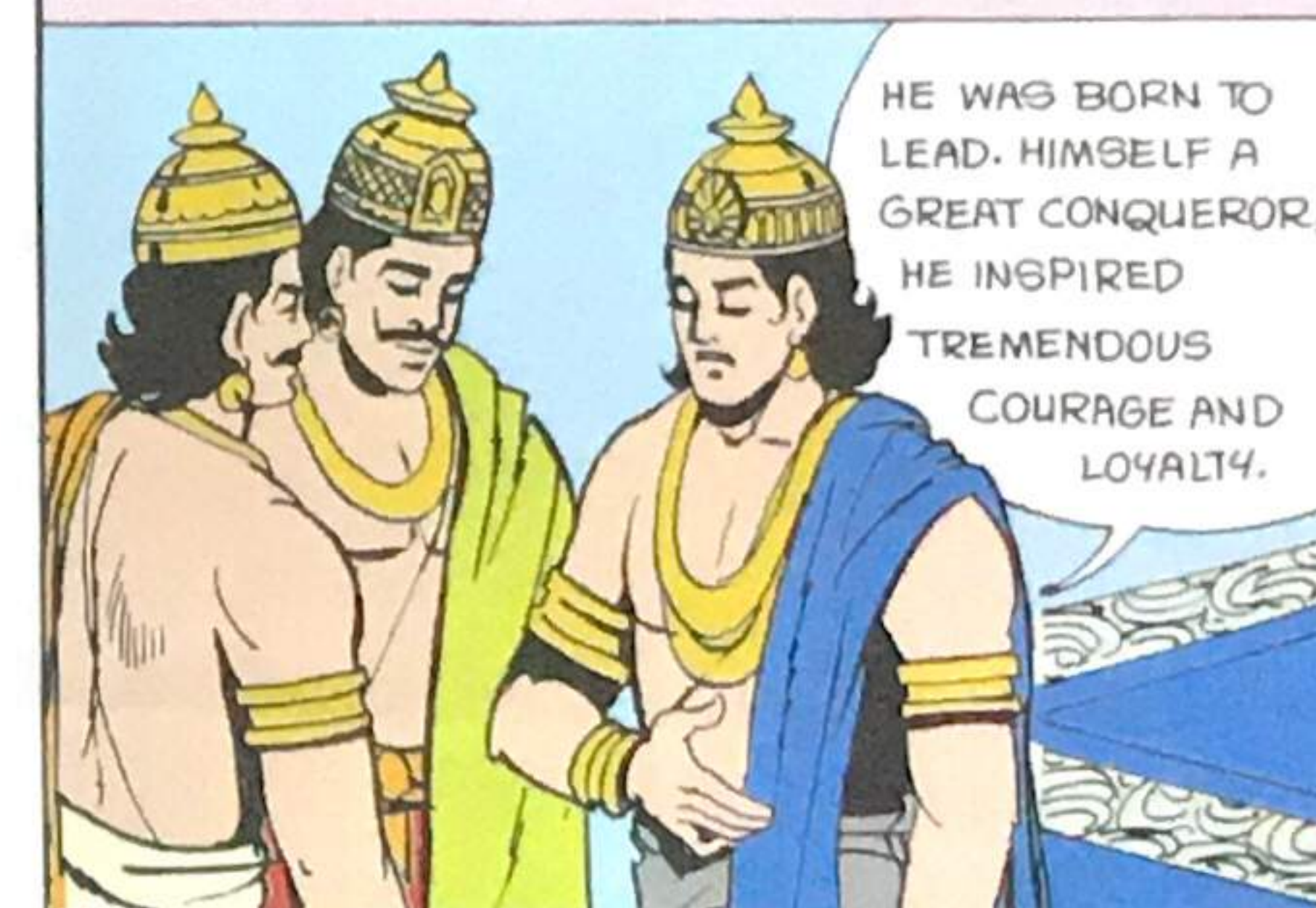
THE PALLAVA NANDIVARMAN TURNED OUT TO BE A POWERFUL ADVERSARY —



DANTIDURGA PLANNED EACH MOVE WITH GREAT CAUTION.

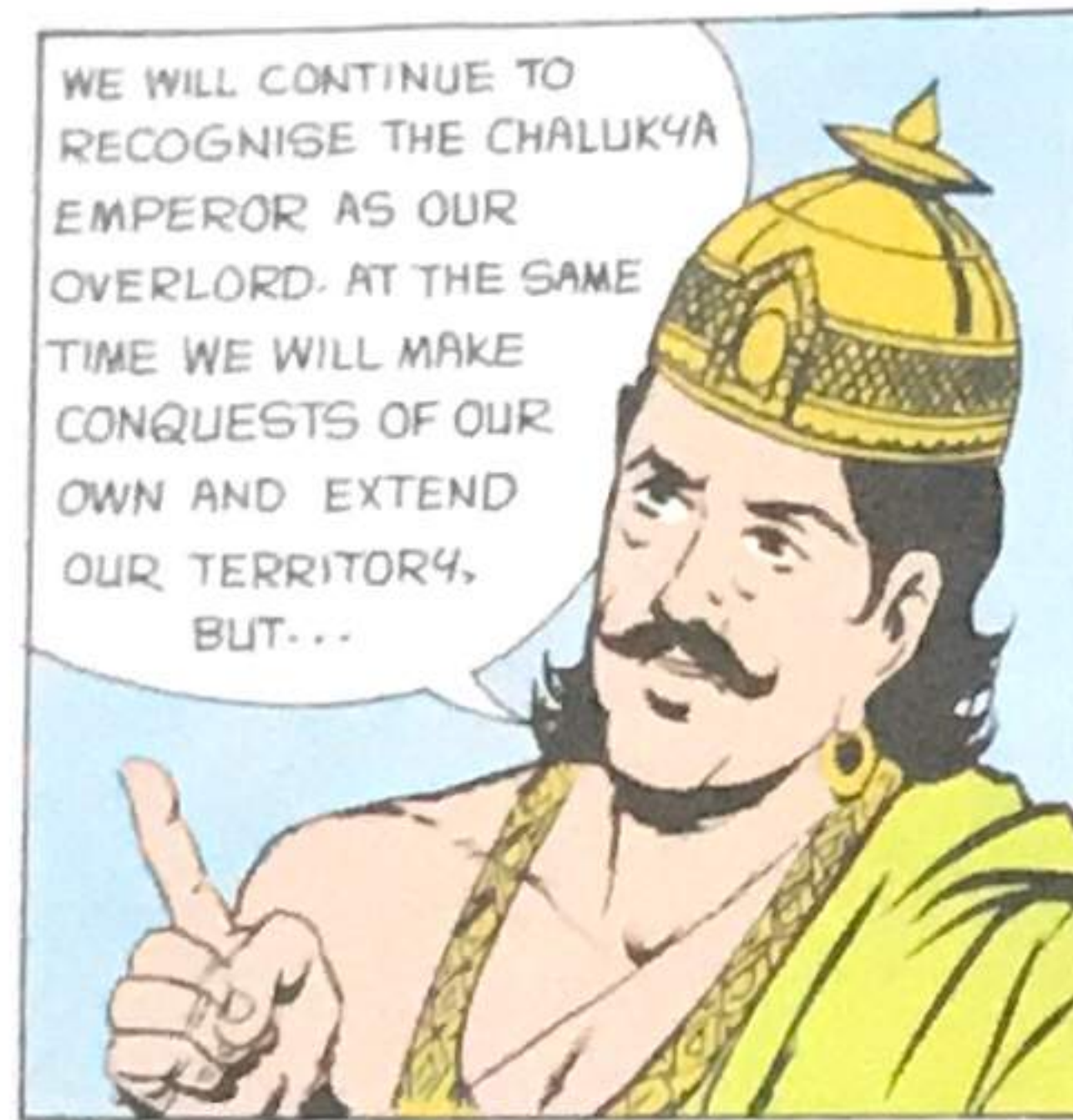


DANTIDURGA MOURNED THE DEATH OF VIKRAMADITYA.



KEERTIVARMAN WHO SUCCEEDED VIKRAMADITYA FAILED TO WIN THE RESPECT OF HIS VASSALS, PROMINENT AMONG THEM BEING DANTIDURGA.





WE WILL CONTINUE TO RECOGNISE THE CHALUKYA EMPEROR AS OUR OVERLORD. AT THE SAME TIME WE WILL MAKE CONQUESTS OF OUR OWN AND EXTEND OUR TERRITORY, BUT...



... BUT NOT AT THE COST OF THE EMPIRE?

YES.

IN PURSUIT OF THIS POLICY DANTIDURGA ADDED TO HIS POSSESSIONS THE GURJARA KINGDOM OF NANDIPURA...

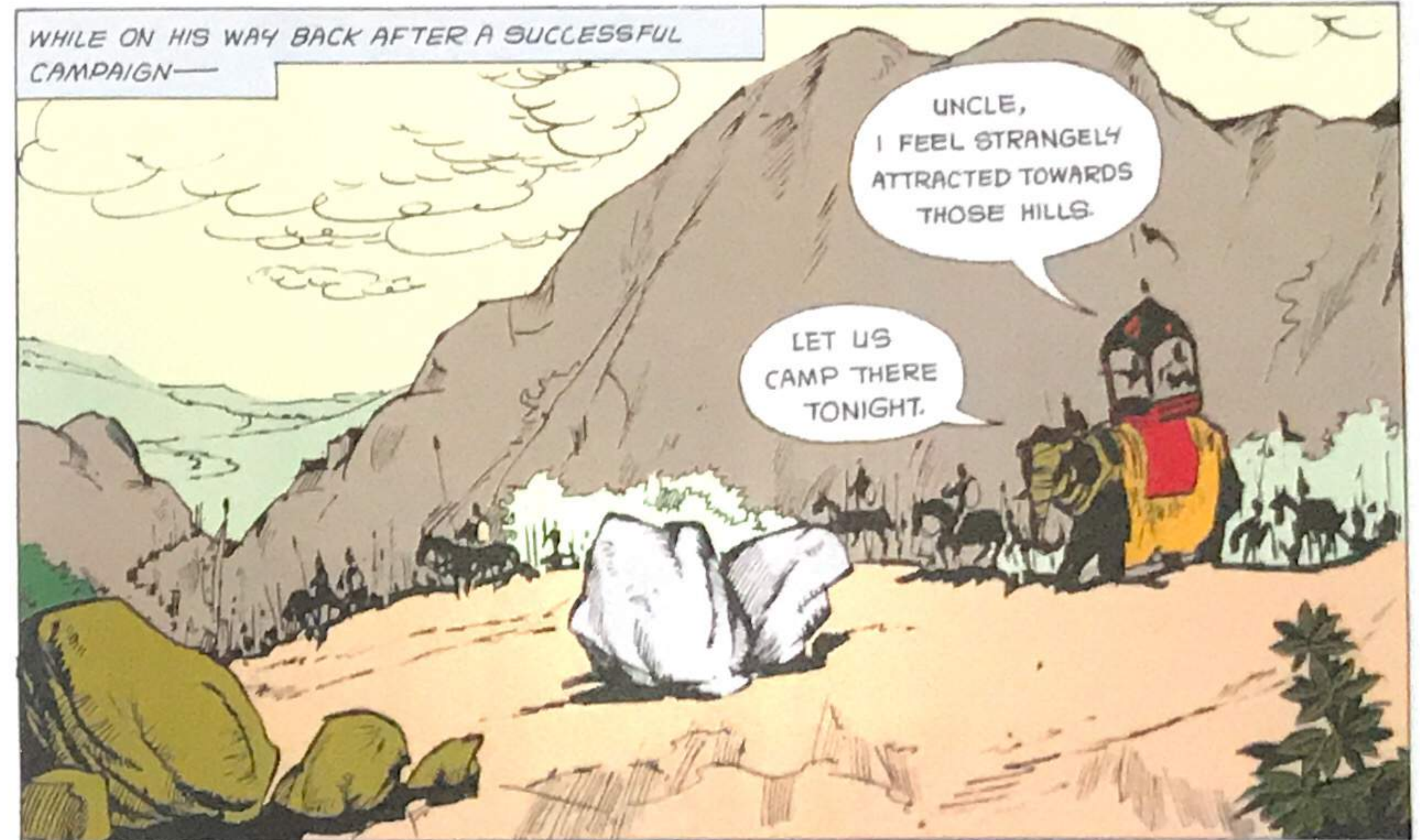


... AND APPOINTED HIS NEPHEW KARKHA HIS REGENT.



YOU SHALL RULE OVER THIS KINGDOM, KARKHA.

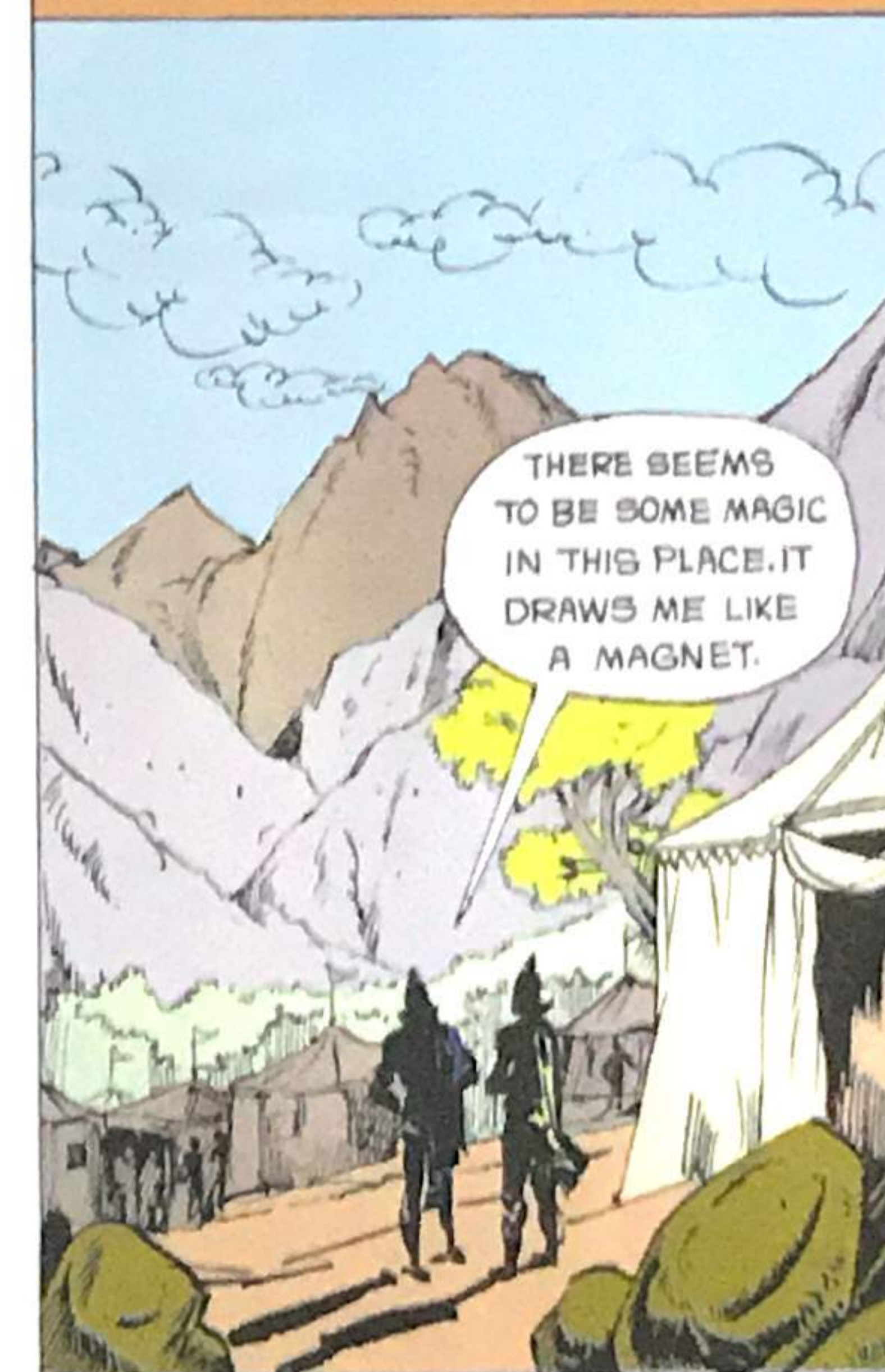
WHILE ON HIS WAY BACK AFTER A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN—



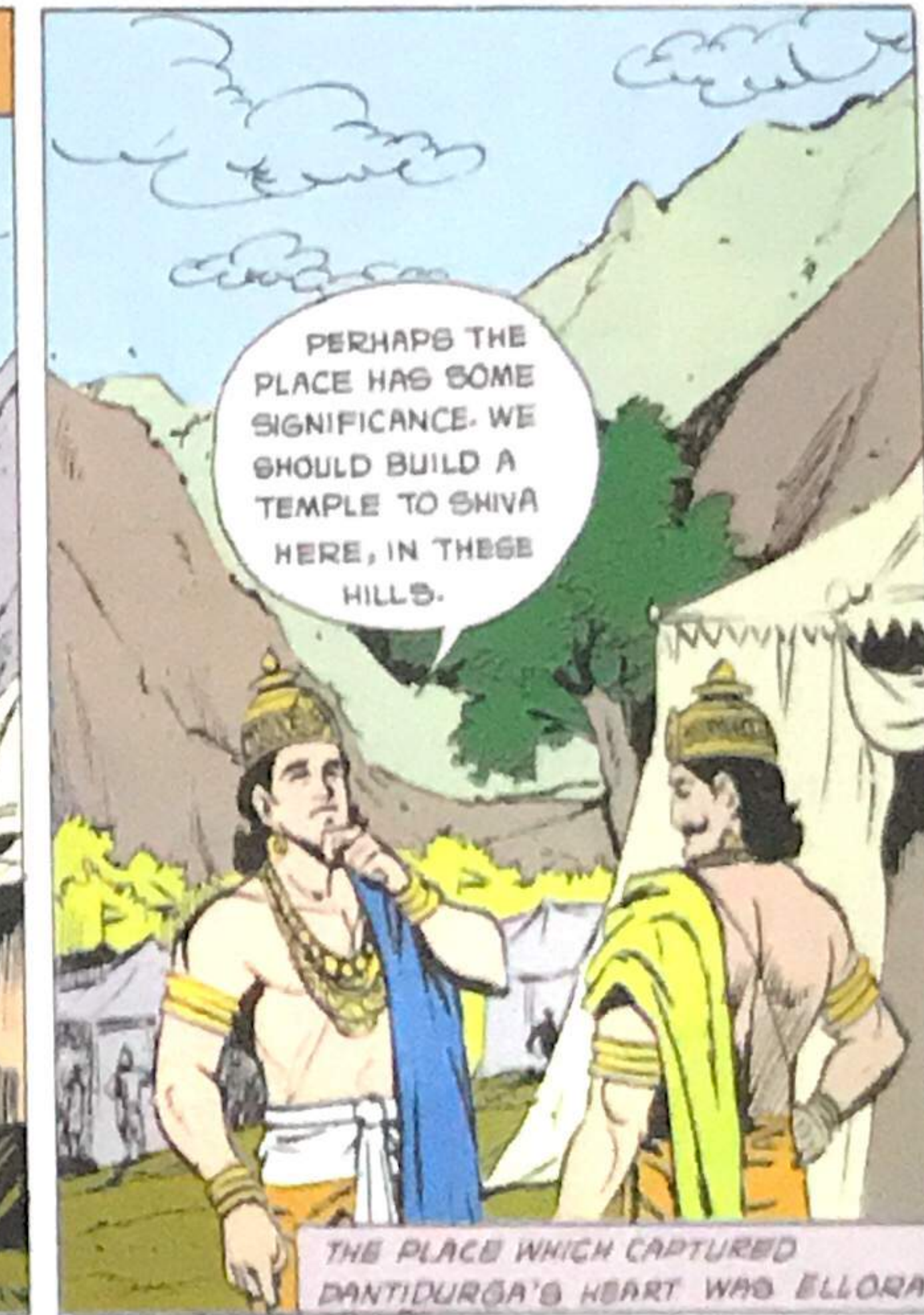
UNCLE, I FEEL STRANGELY ATTRACTED TOWARDS THOSE HILLS.

LET US CAMP THERE TONIGHT.

ROYAL TENTS WERE PITCHED NEAR THE BEAUTIFUL HILLS. NEXT MORNING—

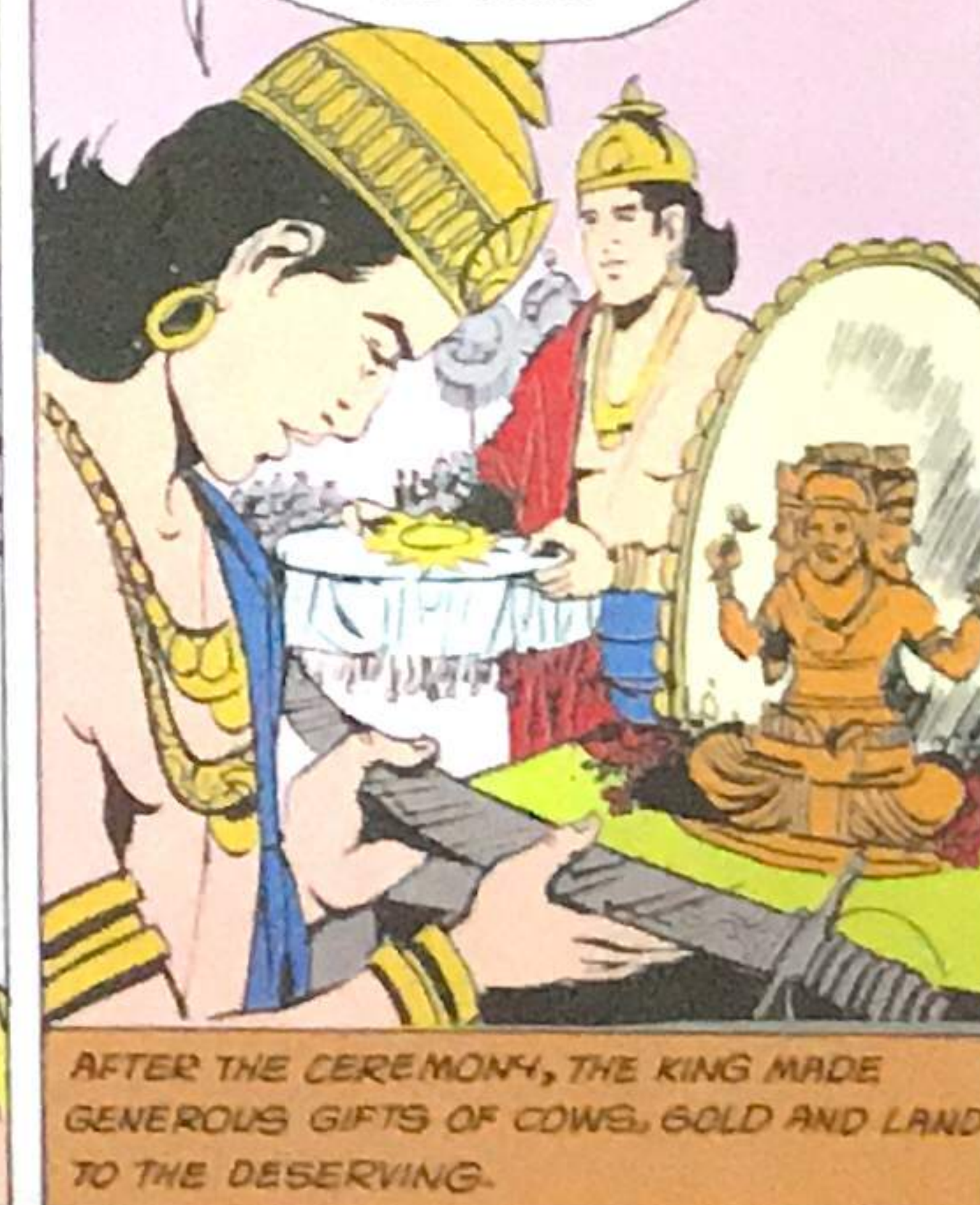
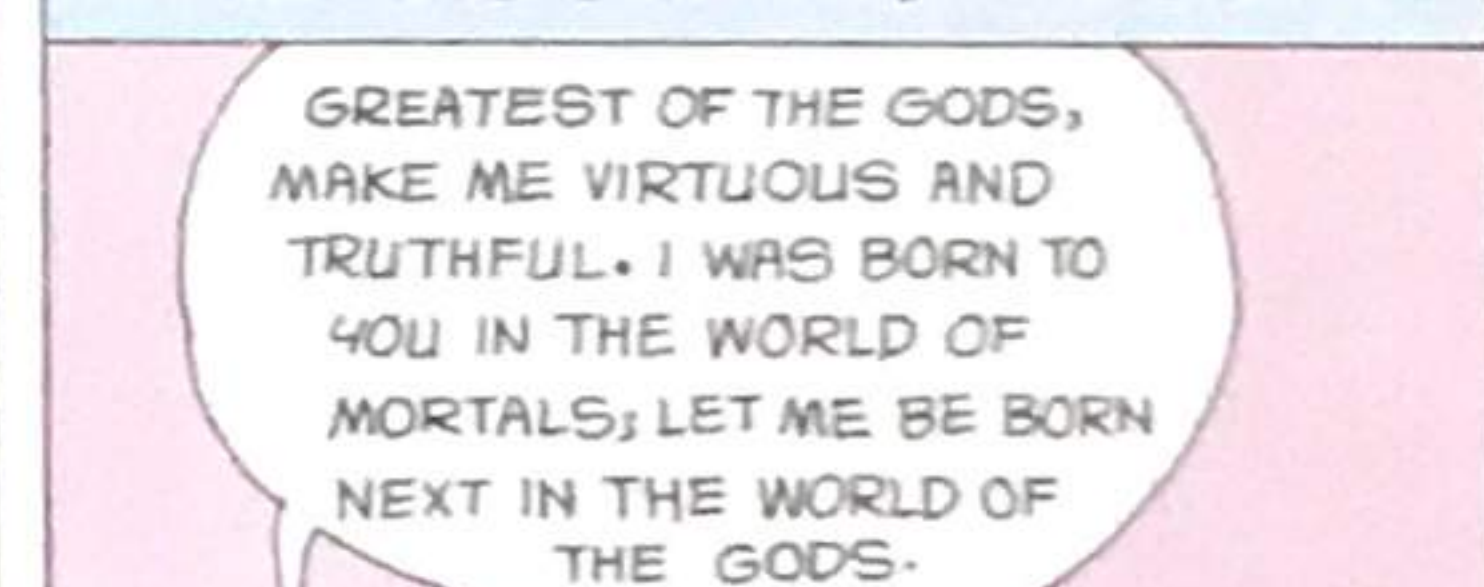
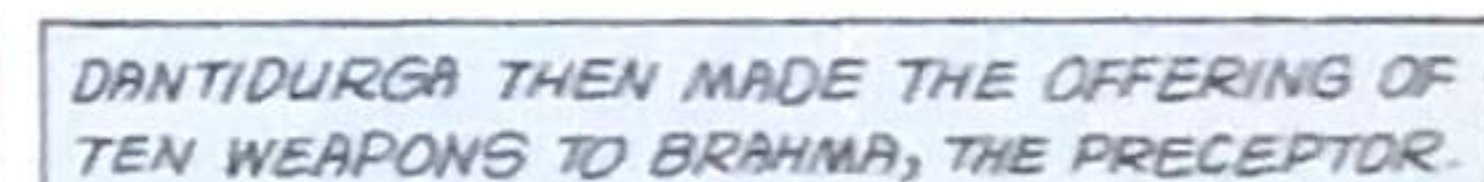
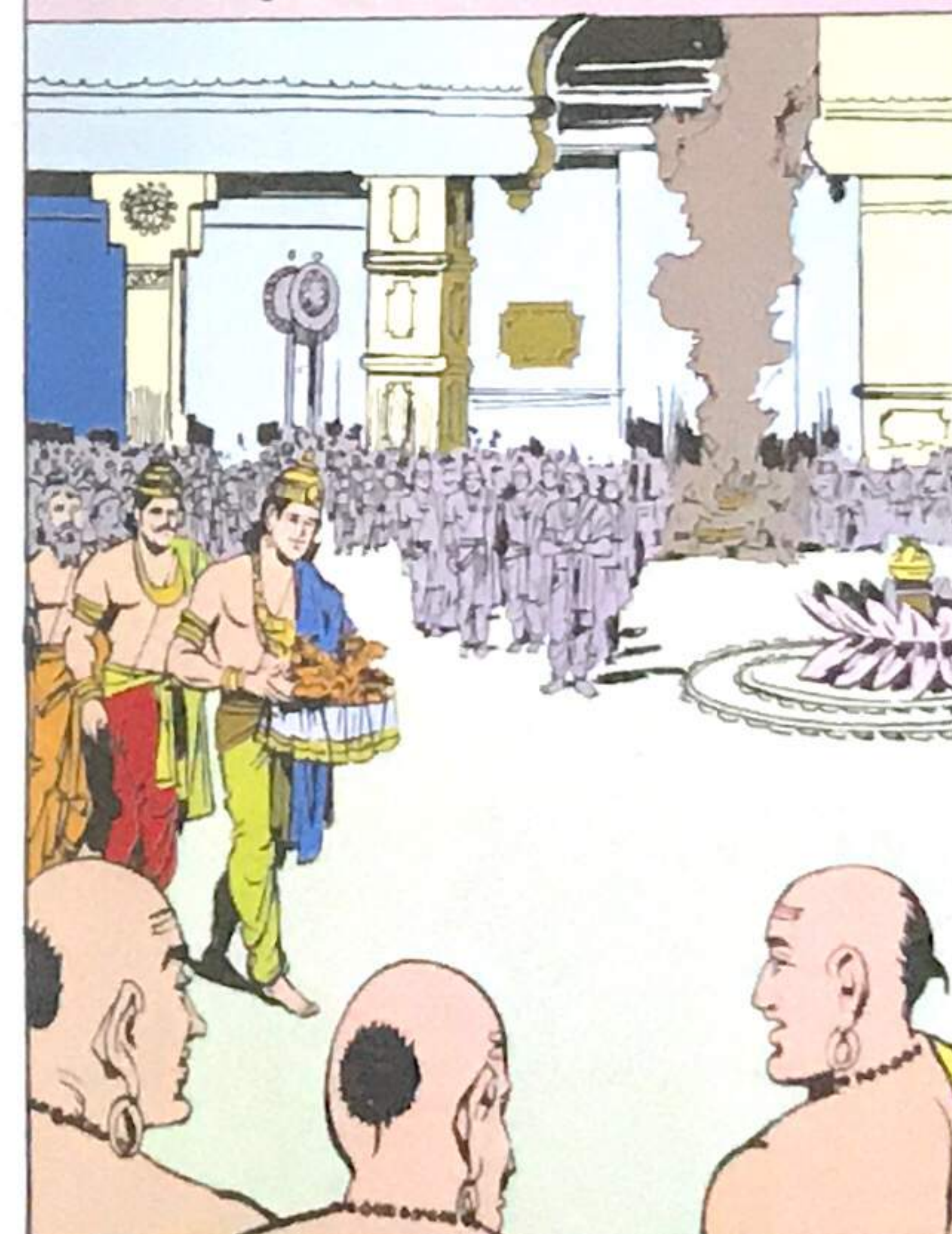
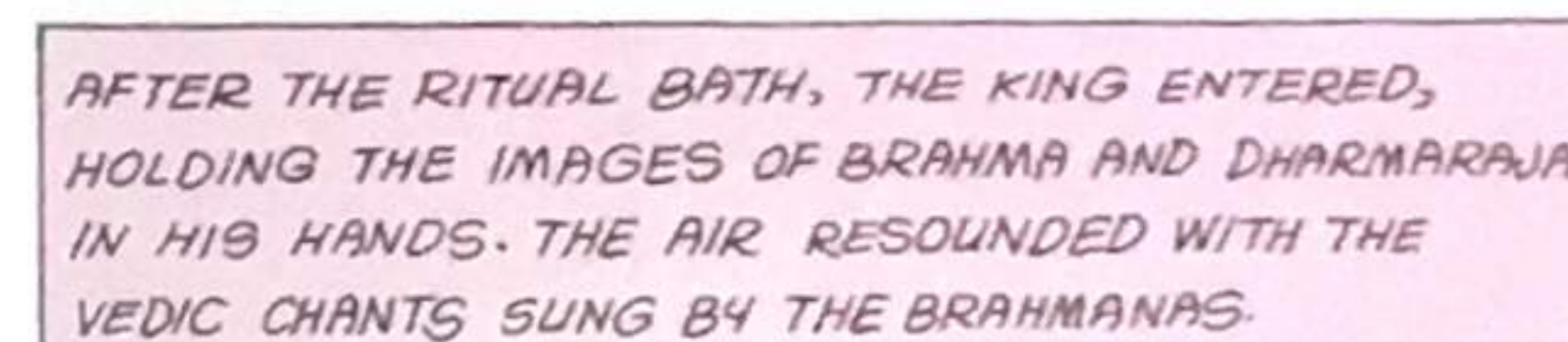
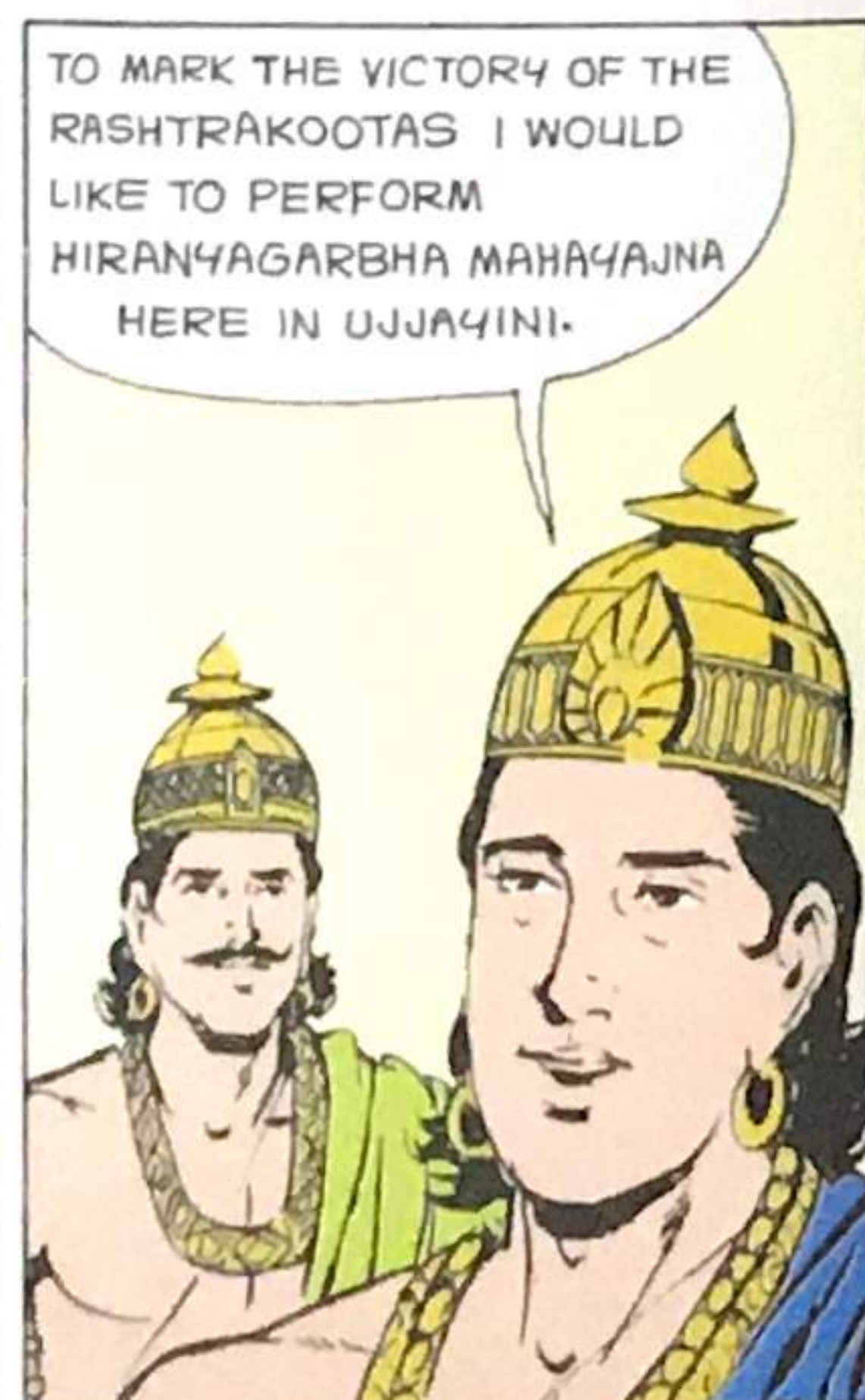
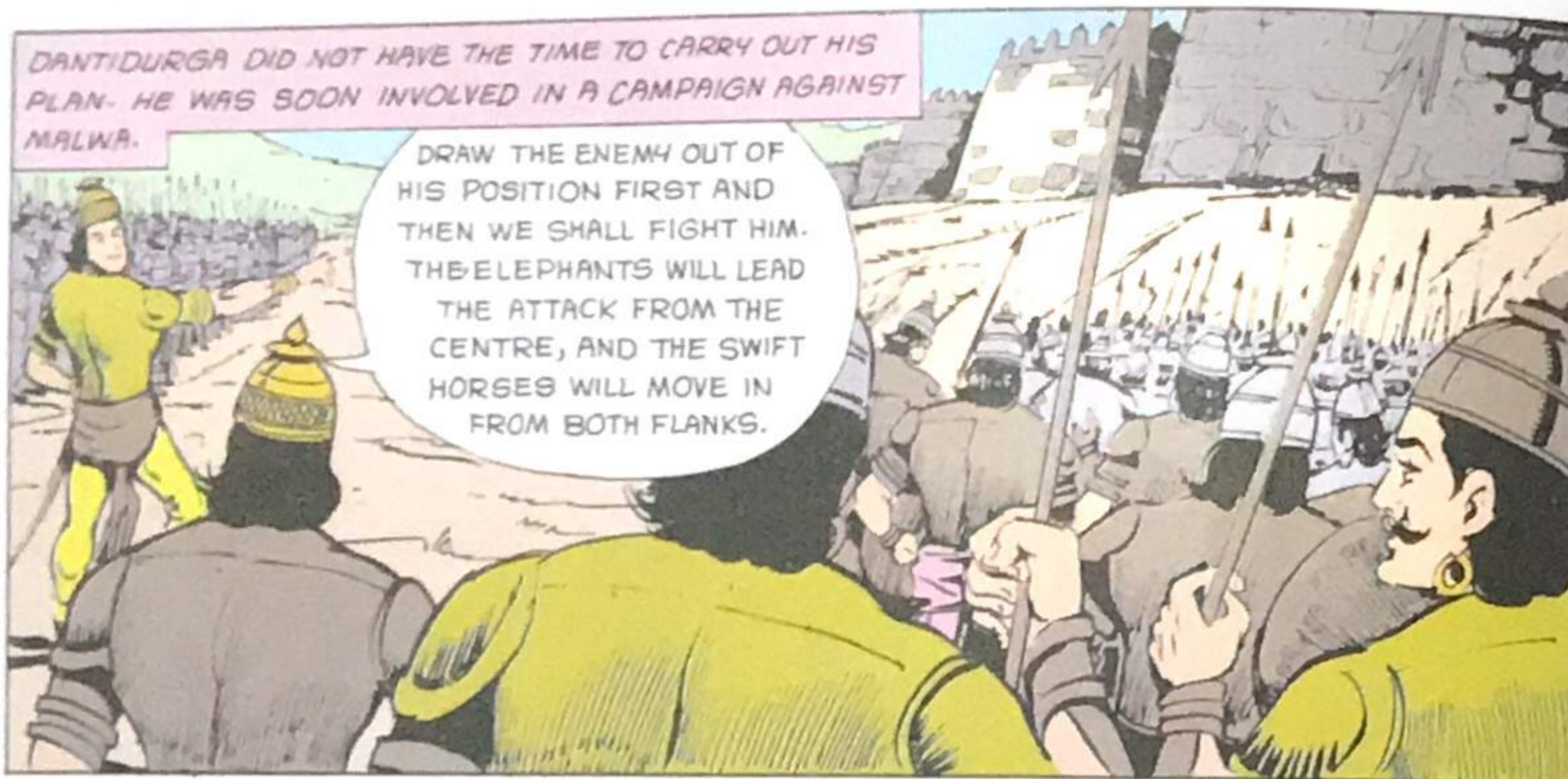


THERE SEEMS TO BE SOME MAGIC IN THIS PLACE. IT DRAWS ME LIKE A MAGNET.

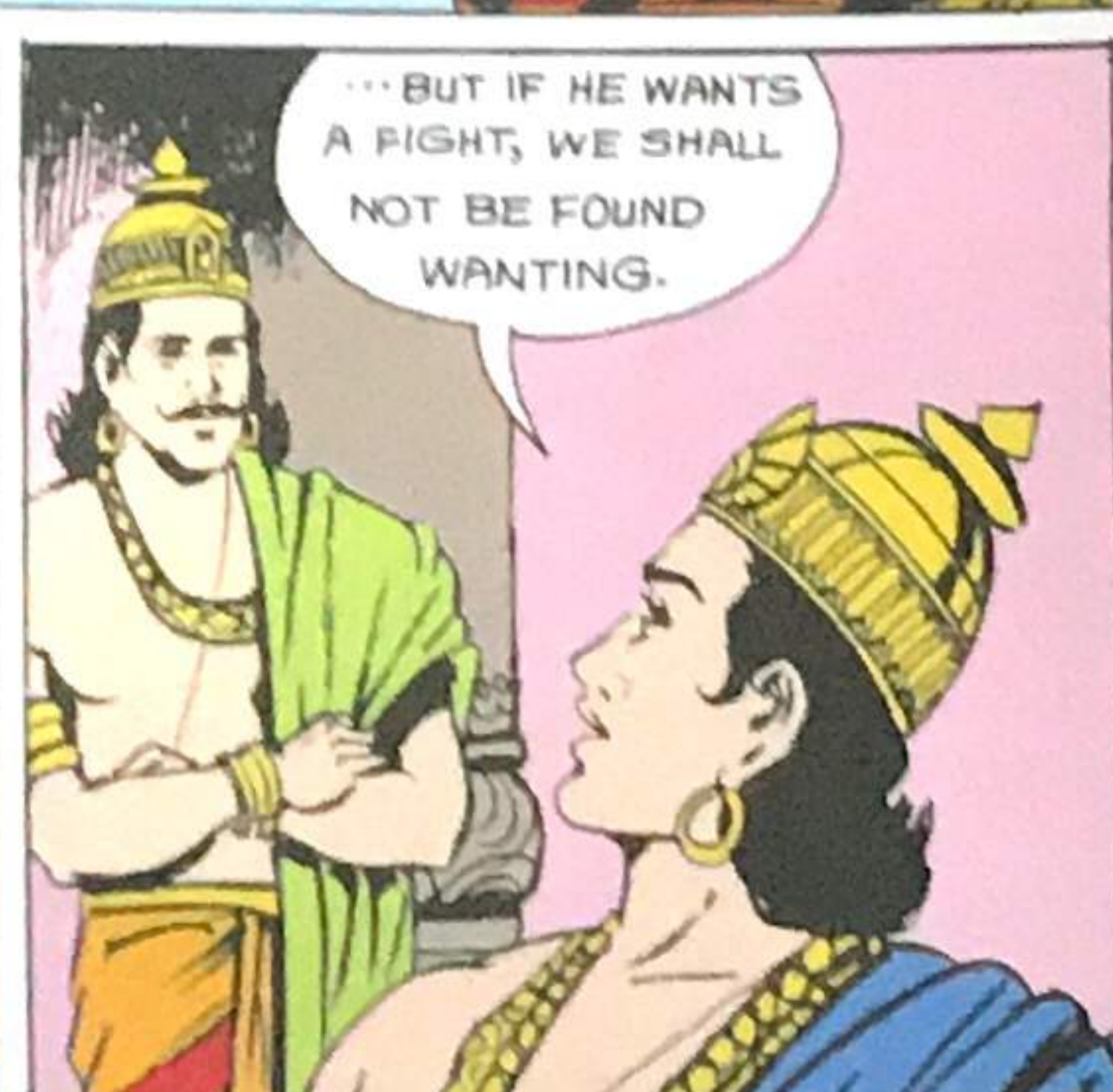
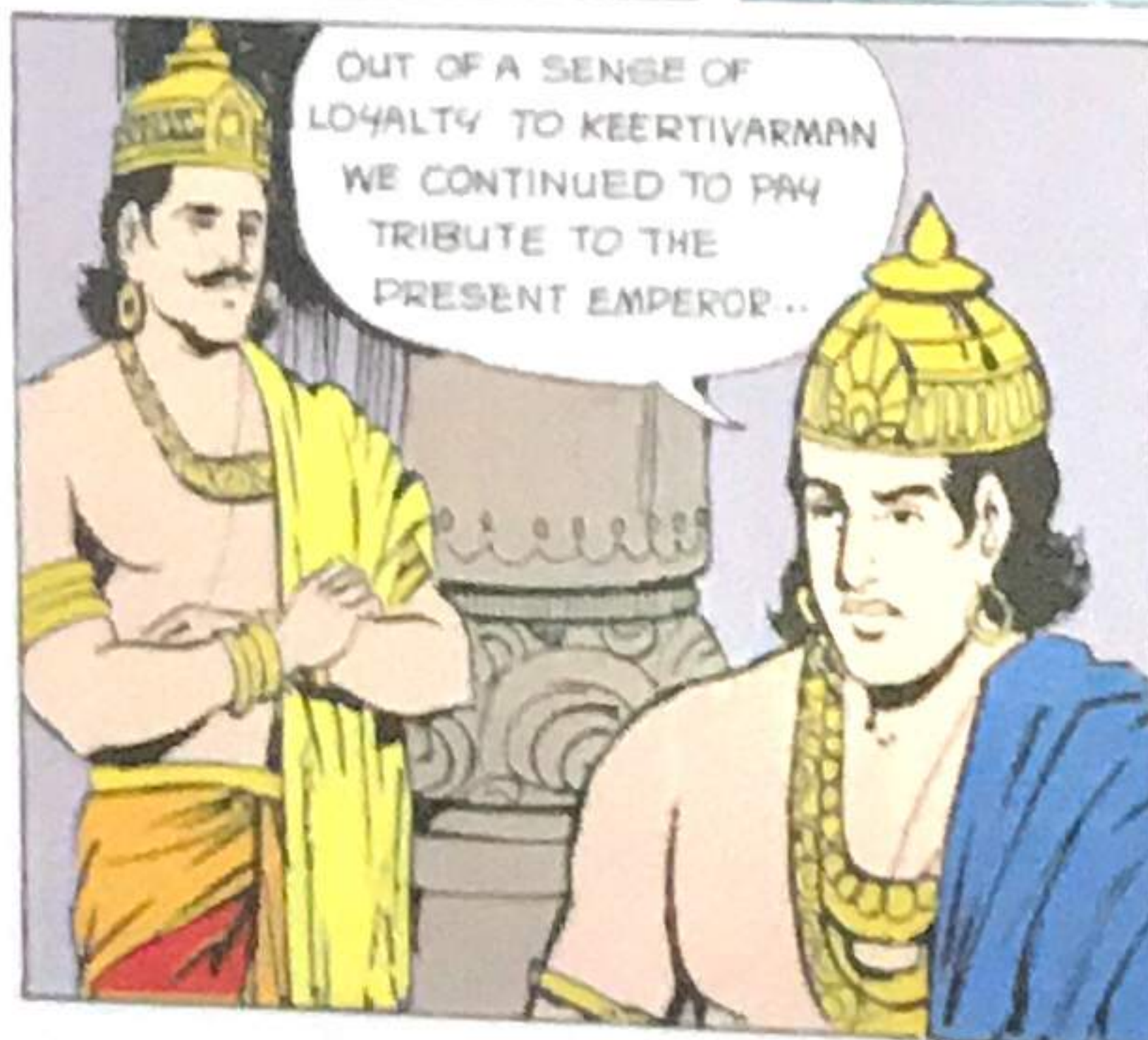
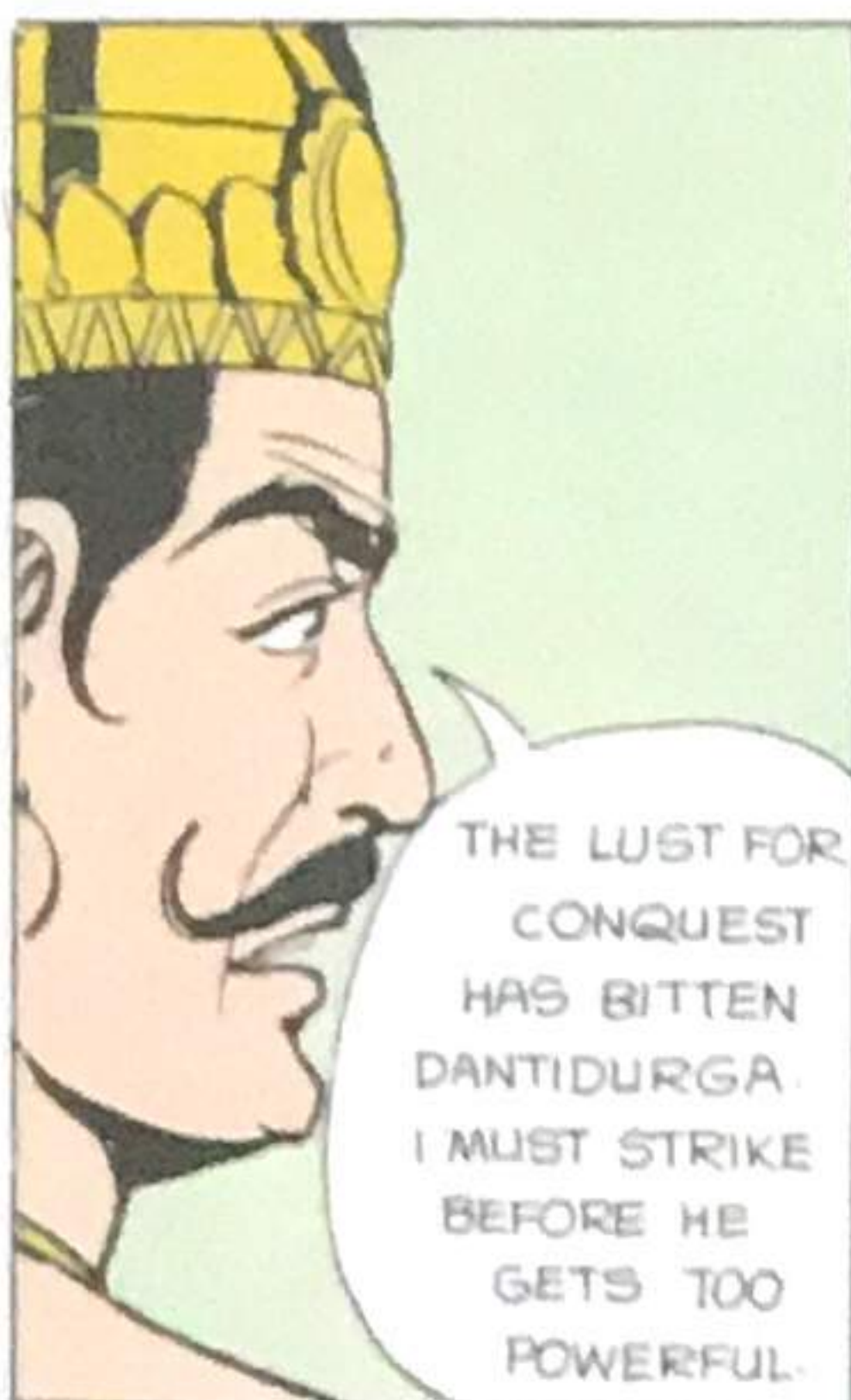


PERHAPS THE PLACE HAS SOME SIGNIFICANCE. WE SHOULD BUILD A TEMPLE TO SHIVA HERE, IN THESE HILLS.

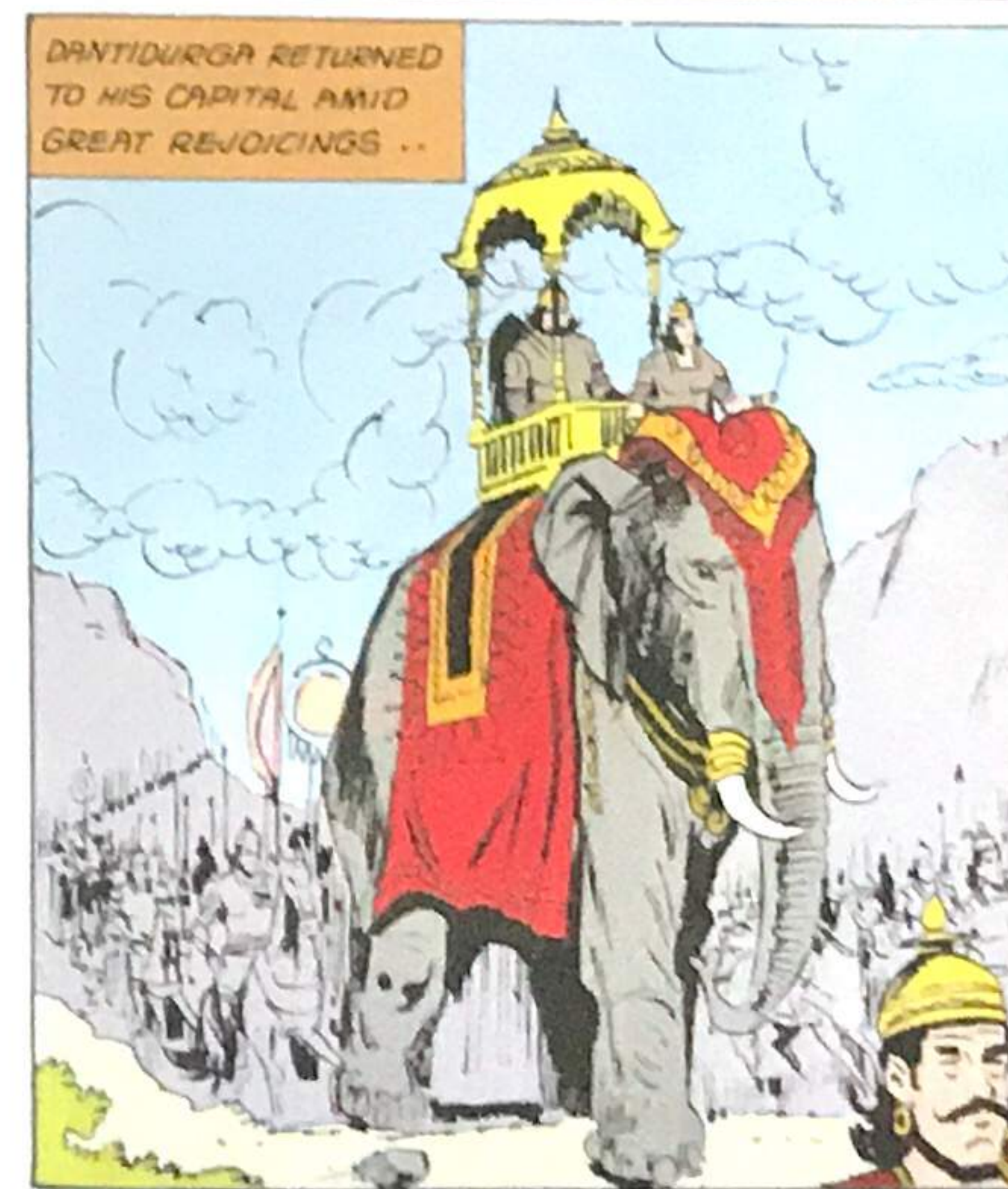
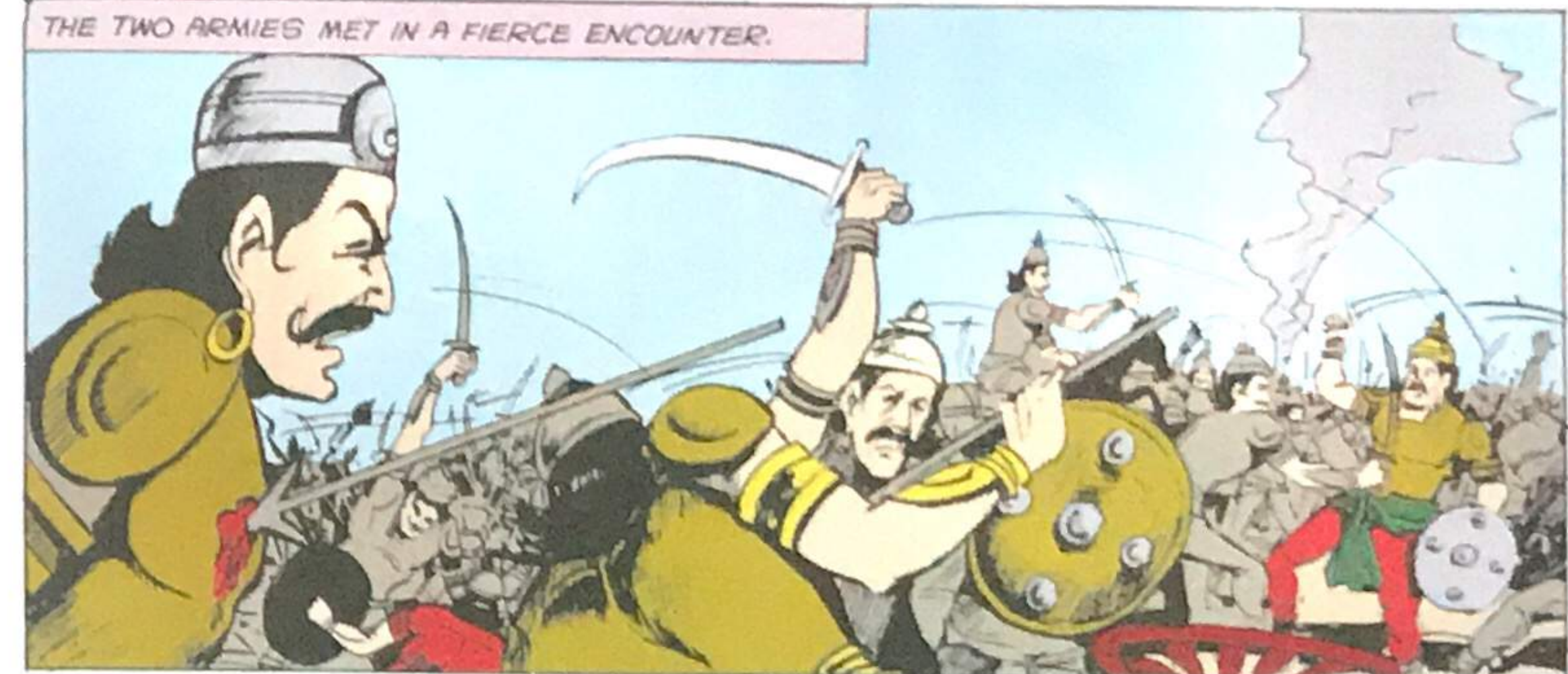
THE PLACE WHICH CAPTURED DANTIDURGA'S HEART WAS ELLORA.



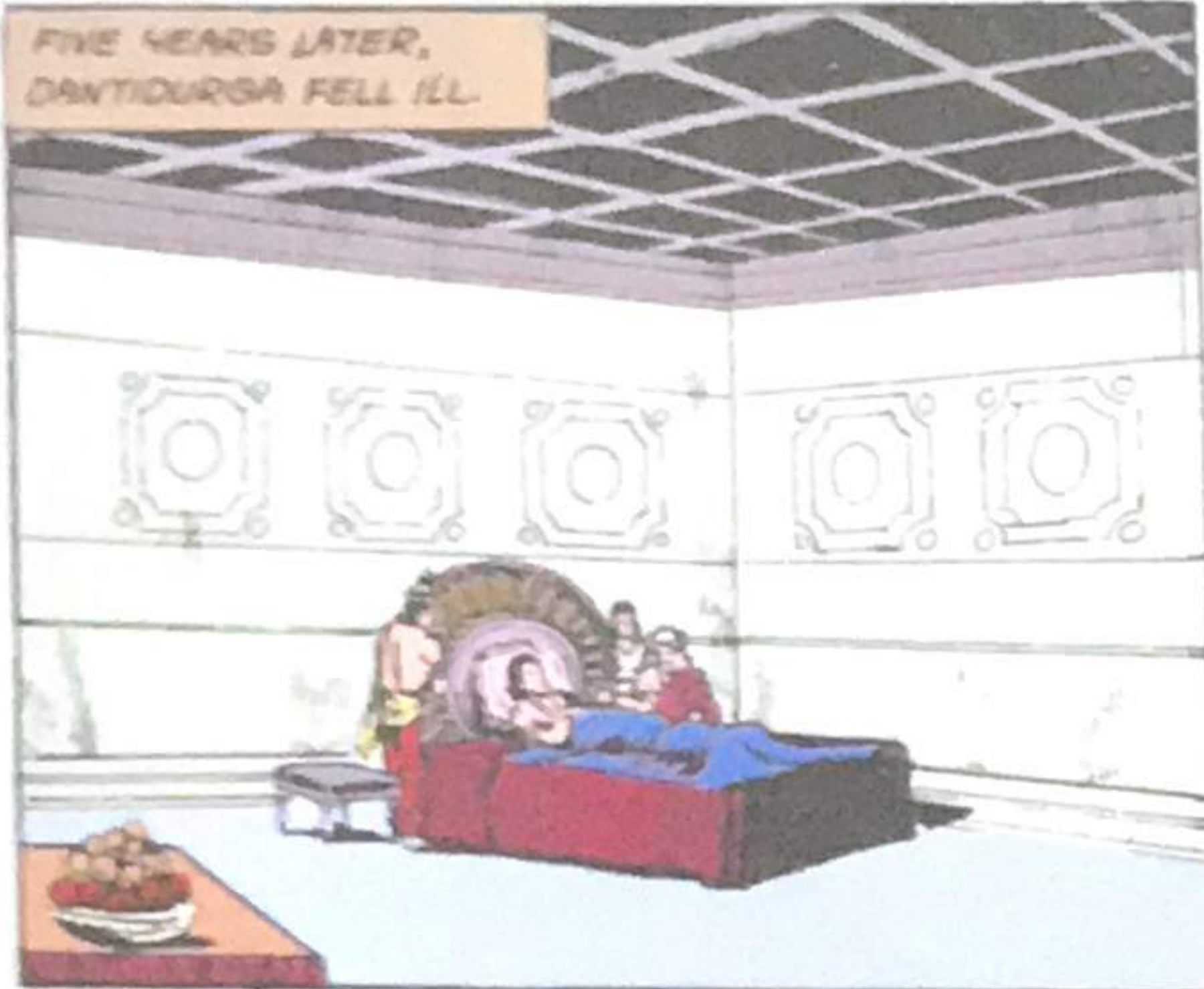
TALES OF DANTIDURGA'S VALOUR AND GENEROSITY REACHED KEERTIVARMAN, THE CHALUKYA EMPEROR. HE FELT DISTURBED.



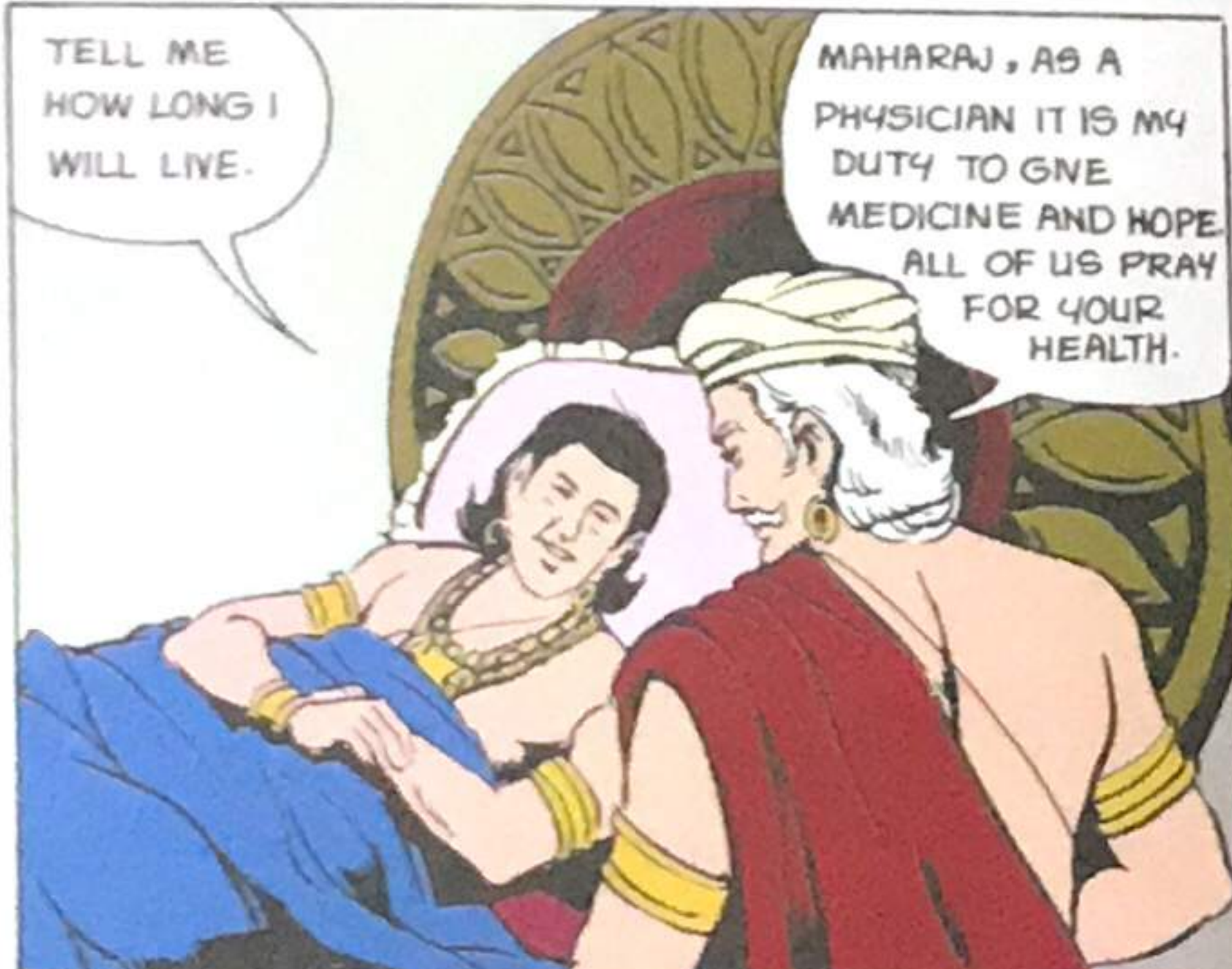
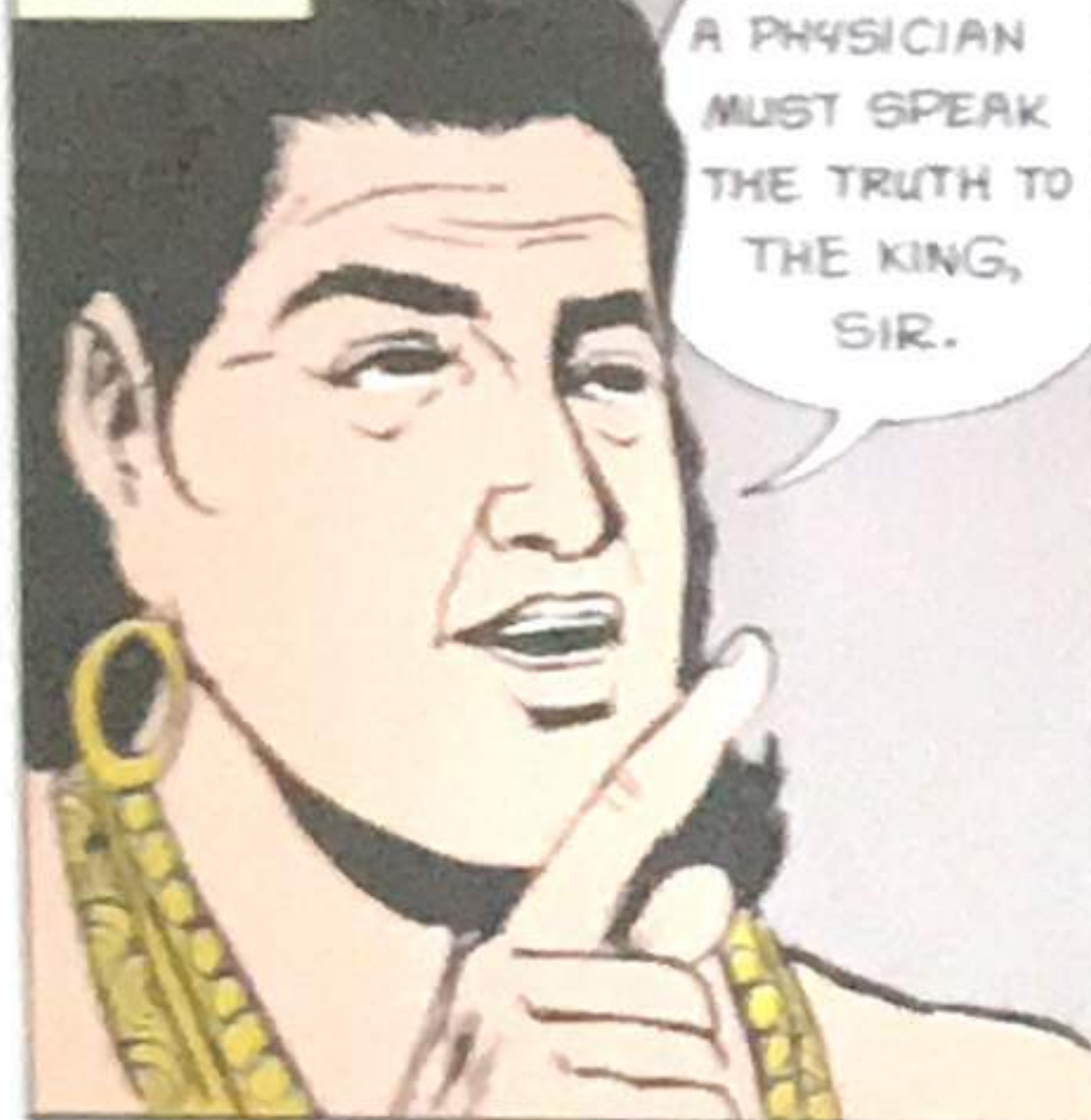
THE TWO ARMIES MET IN A FIERCE ENCOUNTER.



FIVE YEARS LATER,
DANTIDURGA FELL ILL.



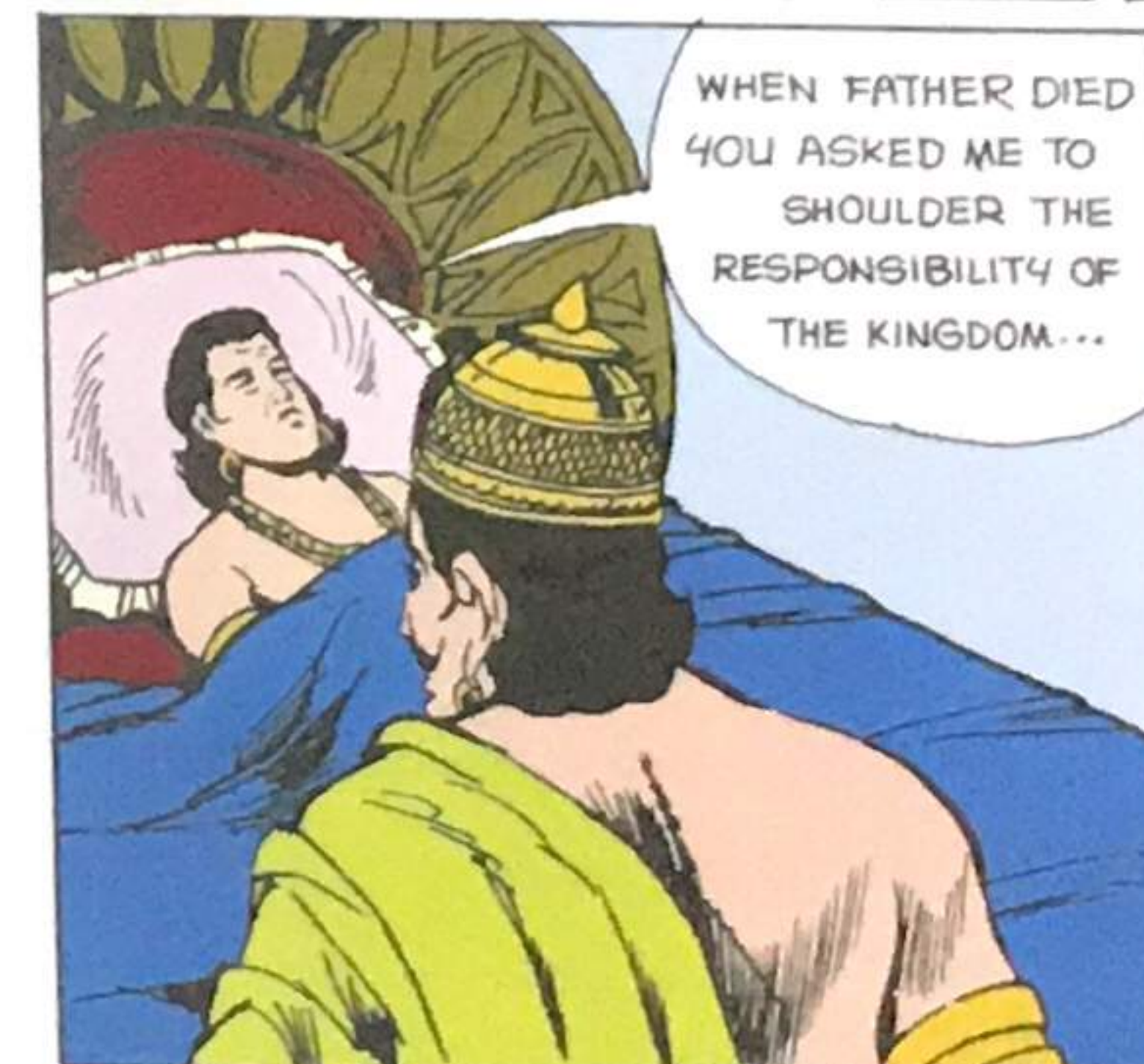
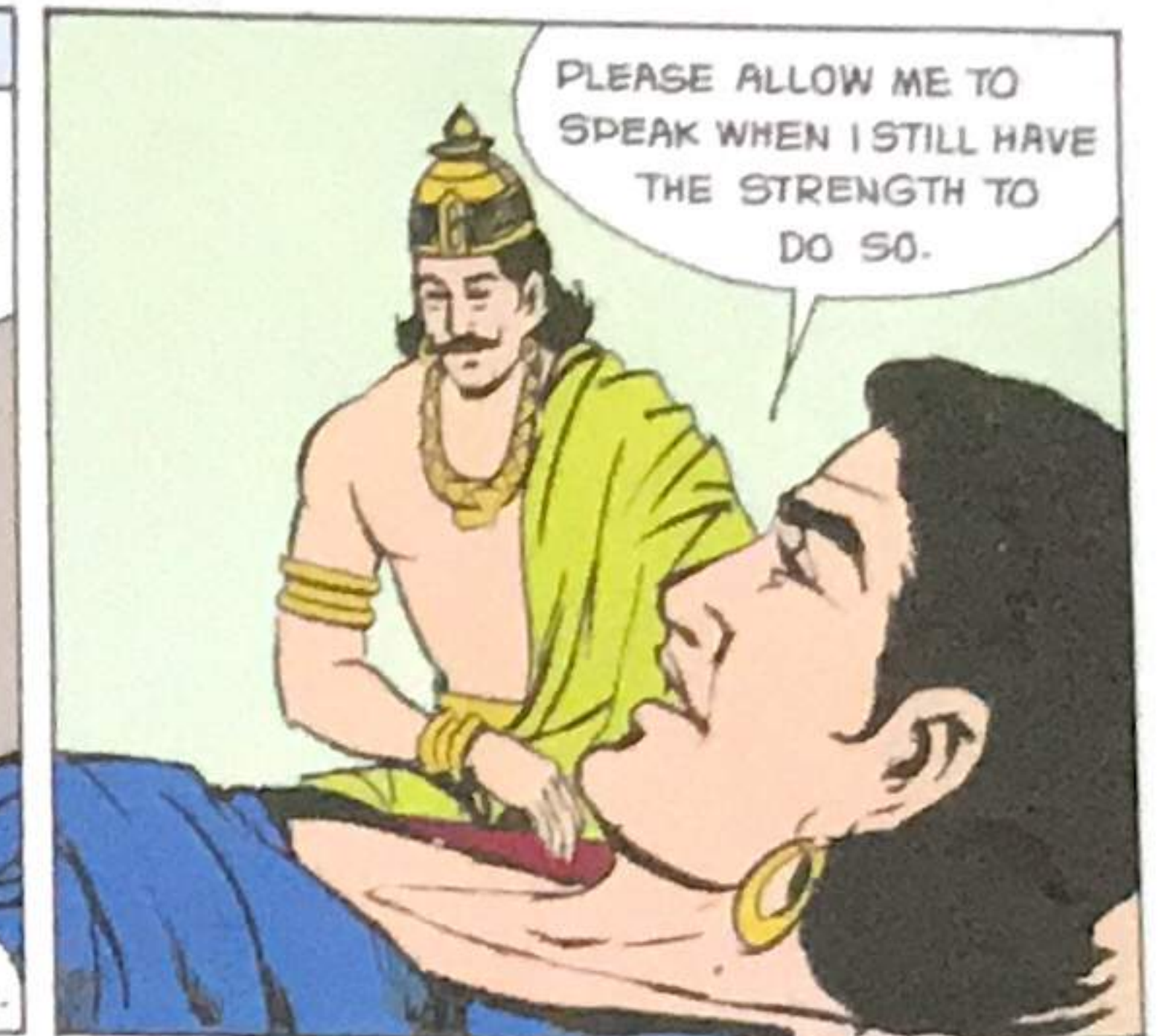
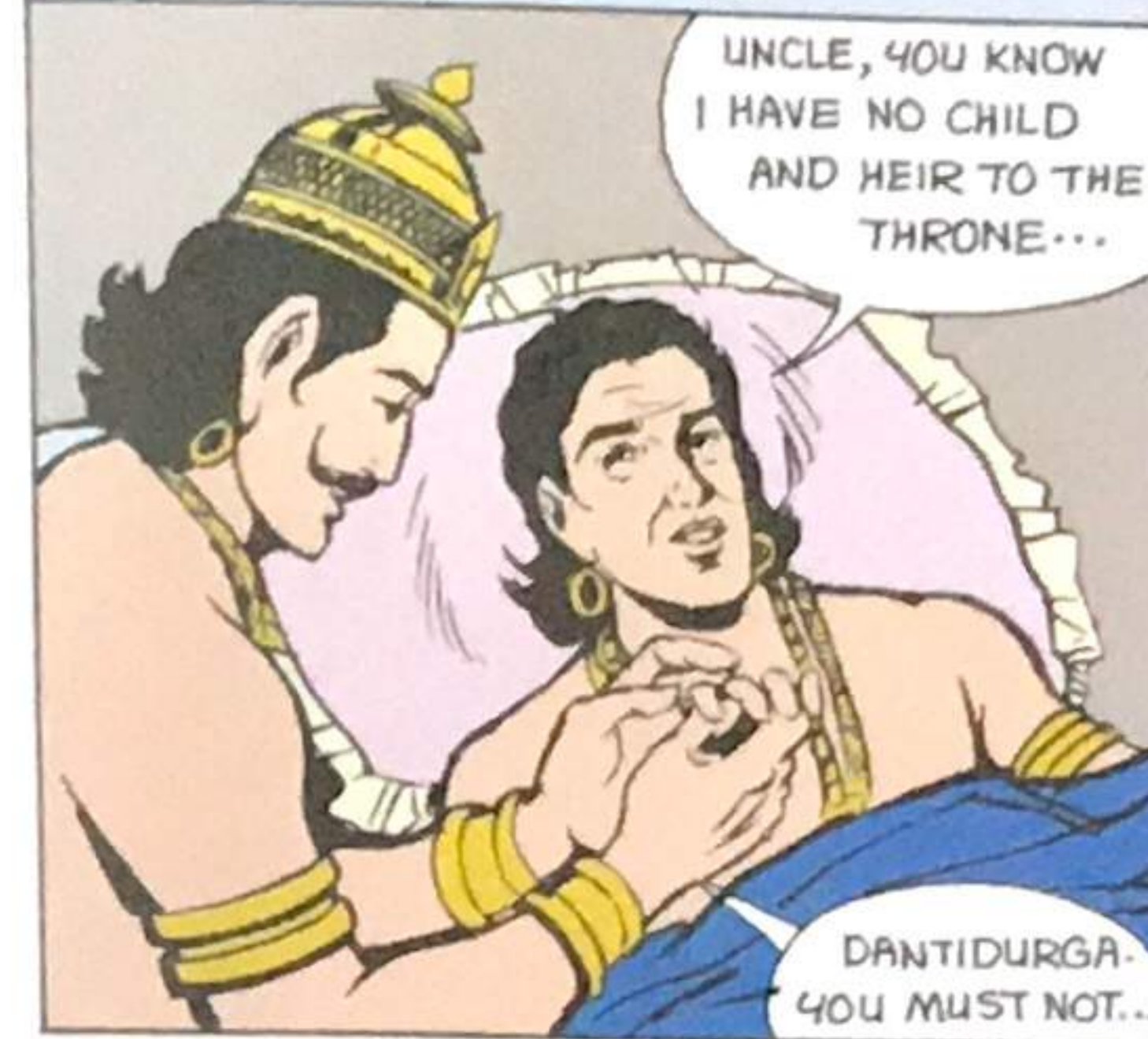
THOUGH FEELING WEAK DANTIDURGA SMILED.



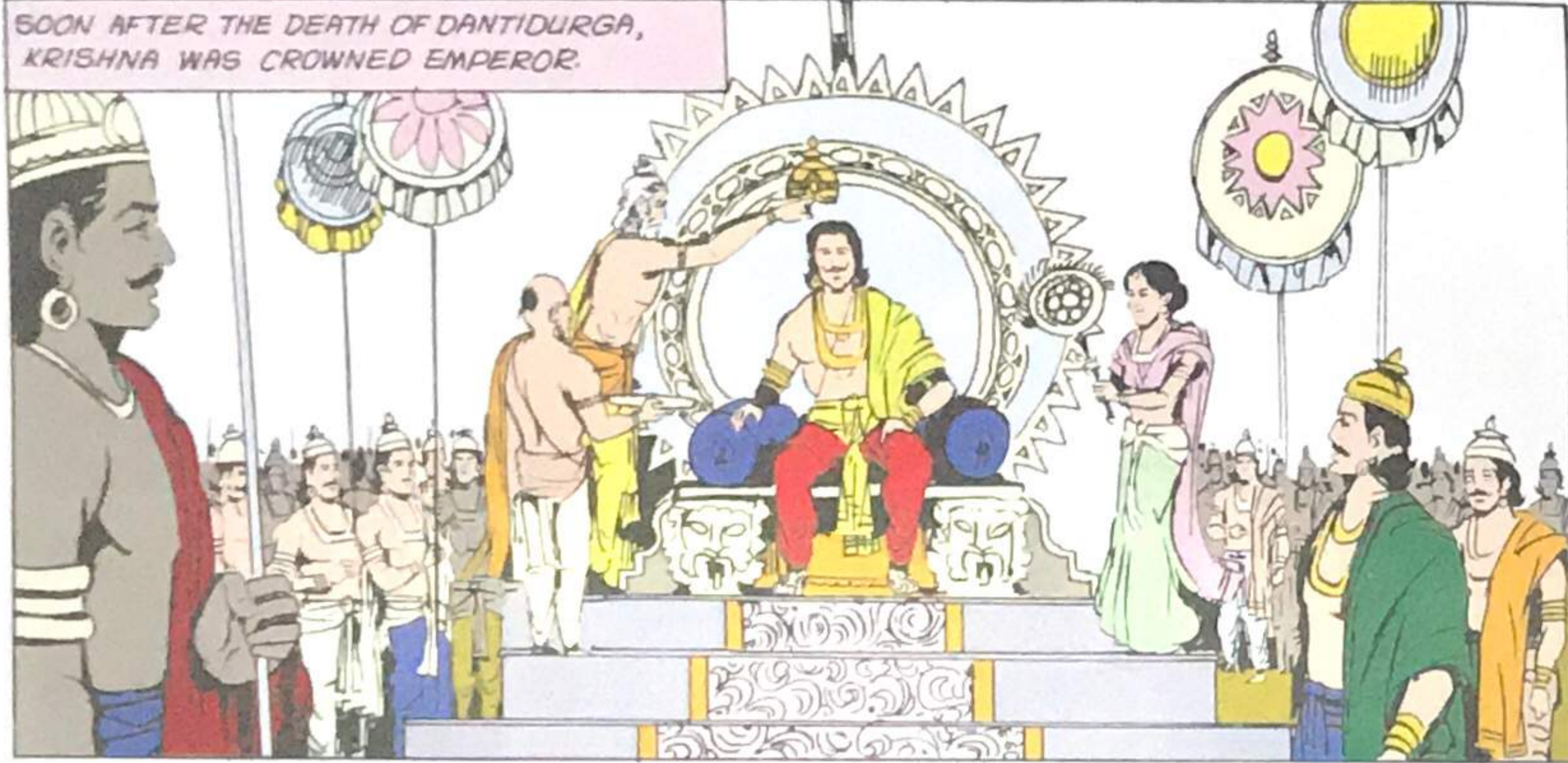
AFTER THE PHYSICIAN LEFT—



WHEN THE TWO WERE LEFT ALONE—



SOON AFTER THE DEATH OF DANTIDURGA, KRISHNA WAS CROWNED EMPEROR.



KRISHNA APPOINTED HIS SON GOVINDA THE COMMANDER OF HIS FORCES.



AGAIN THE TWO GREAT POWERS MET IN A TRIAL OF STRENGTH.

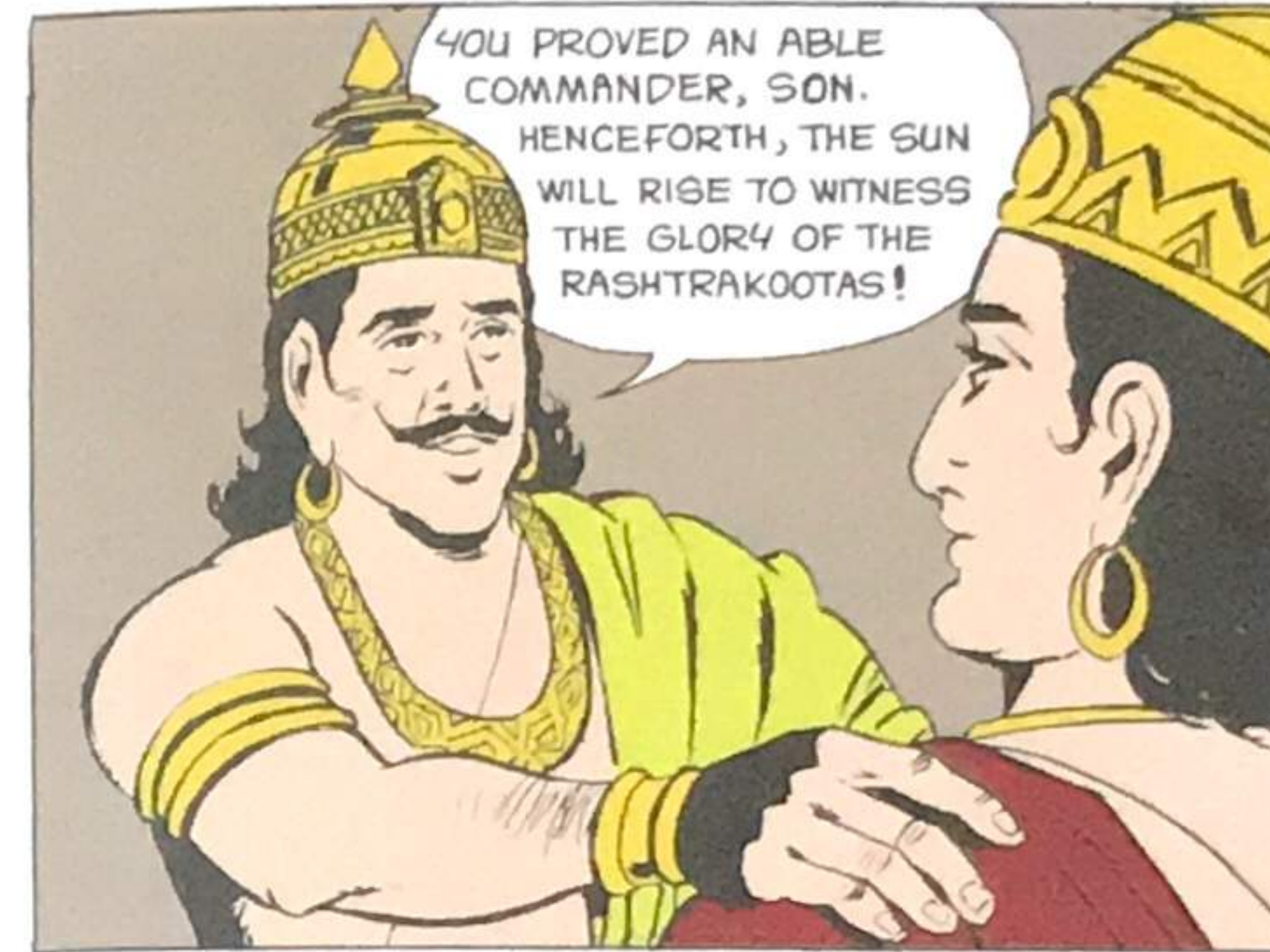


THE MORALE OF THE RASHTRAKOOTA ARMY WAS HIGH, AND KEERTIVARMAN WAS VANQUISHED.

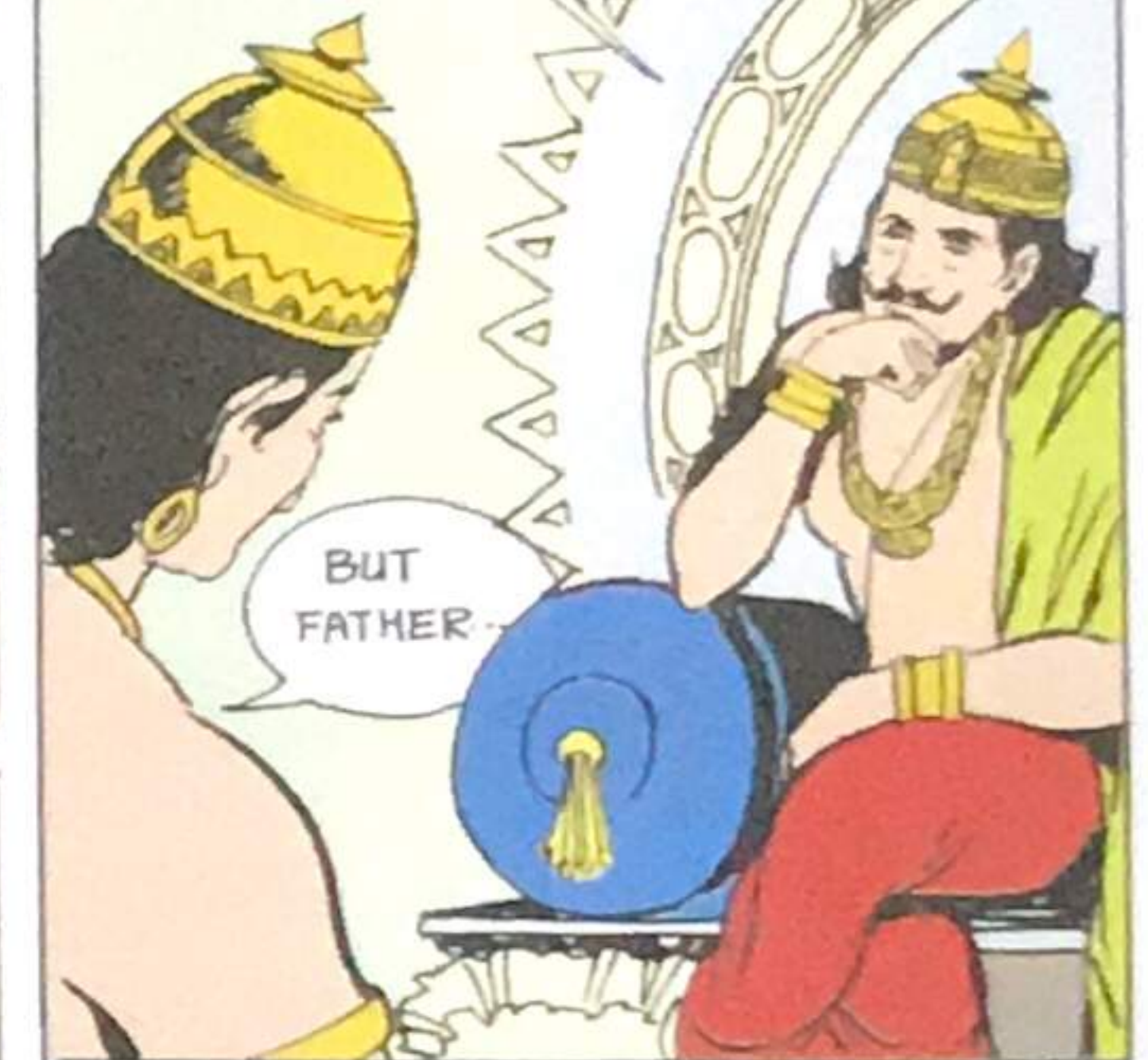
THERE FLEES THE LAST OF THEIR ARMY, WITH MY MEN GIVING THEM HOT CHASE!



YOU PROVED AN ABLE COMMANDER, SON. HENCEFORTH, THE SUN WILL RISE TO WITNESS THE GLORY OF THE RASHTRAKOOTAS!



NOW WE SHOULD SETTLE DOWN TO BRING PEACE AND PROSPERITY TO OUR GREAT COUNTRY.



BUT FATHER...

WE CANNOT RULE IN PEACE AS LONG AS THE CHALUKYAS OF Vengi ARE HOSTILE TO US.



OUR NEXT CAMPAIGN WILL BE AGAINST THEM.

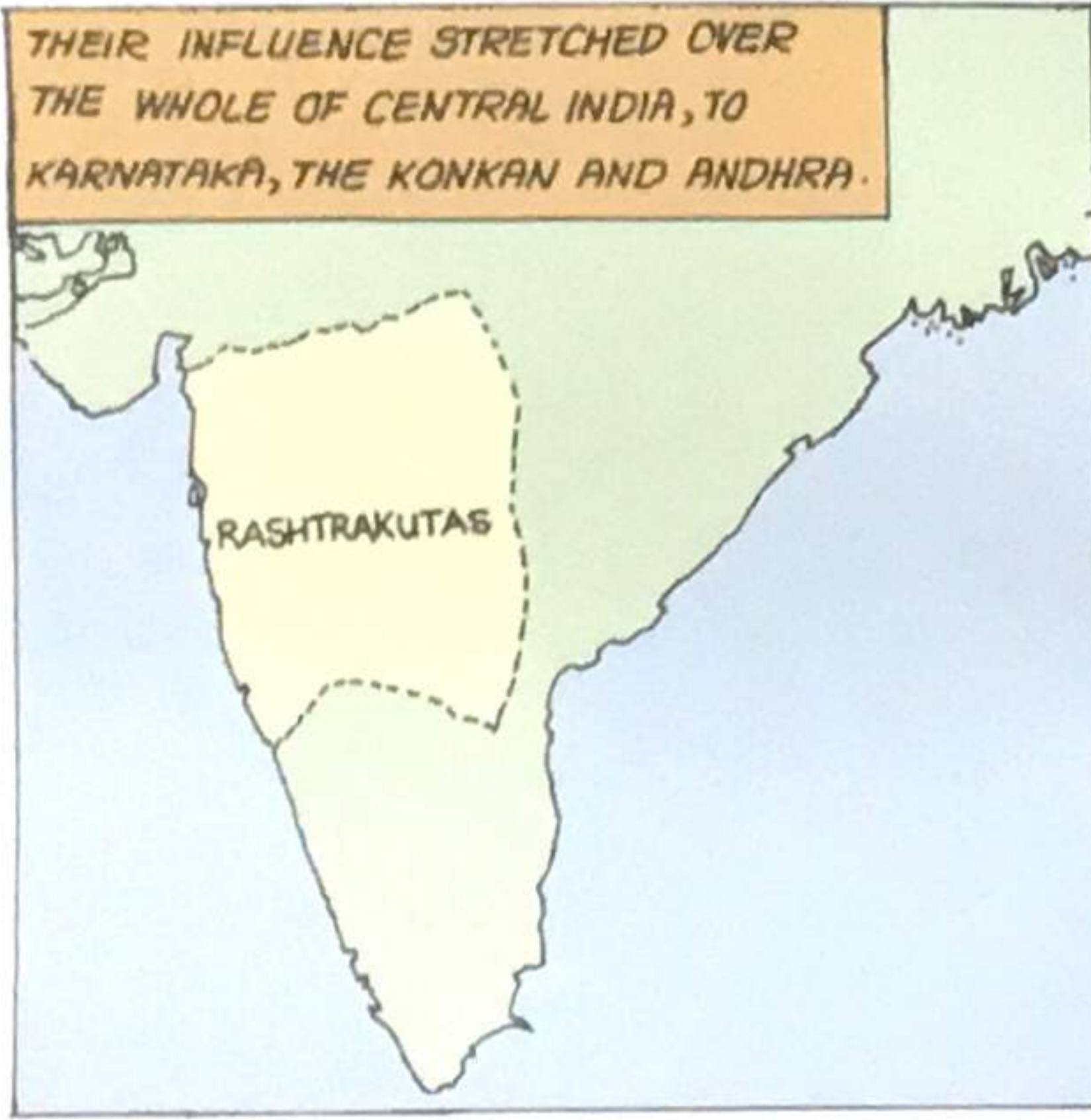


GOVINDA ACCOMPLISHED HIS MISSION WITH REBOUNDED SUCCESS.



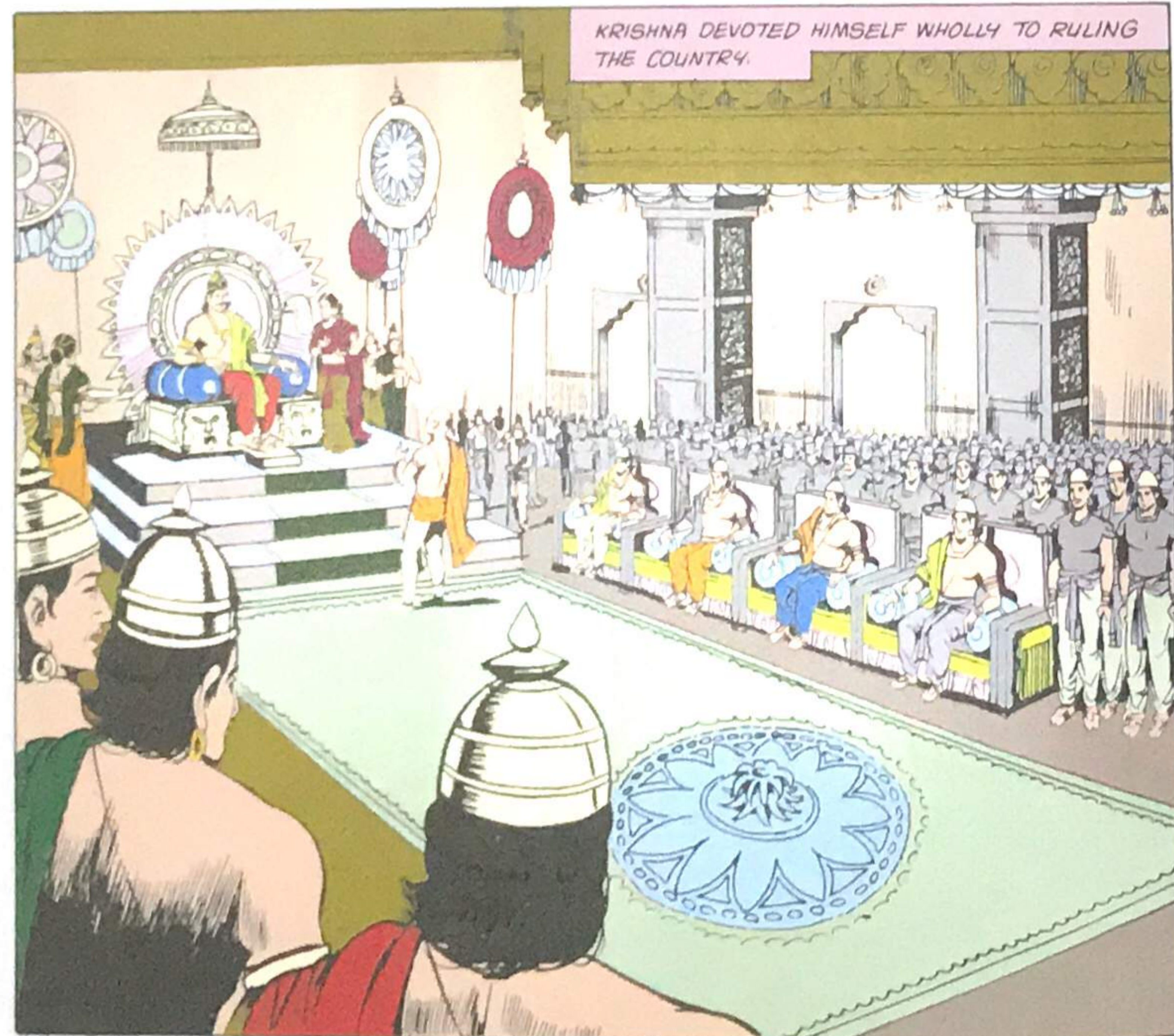


THE RASHTRAKOOTAS WERE NOW THE GREATEST POWER IN THE LAND.



THEIR INFLUENCE STRETCHED OVER THE WHOLE OF CENTRAL INDIA, TO KARNATAKA, THE KONKAN AND ANDHRA.

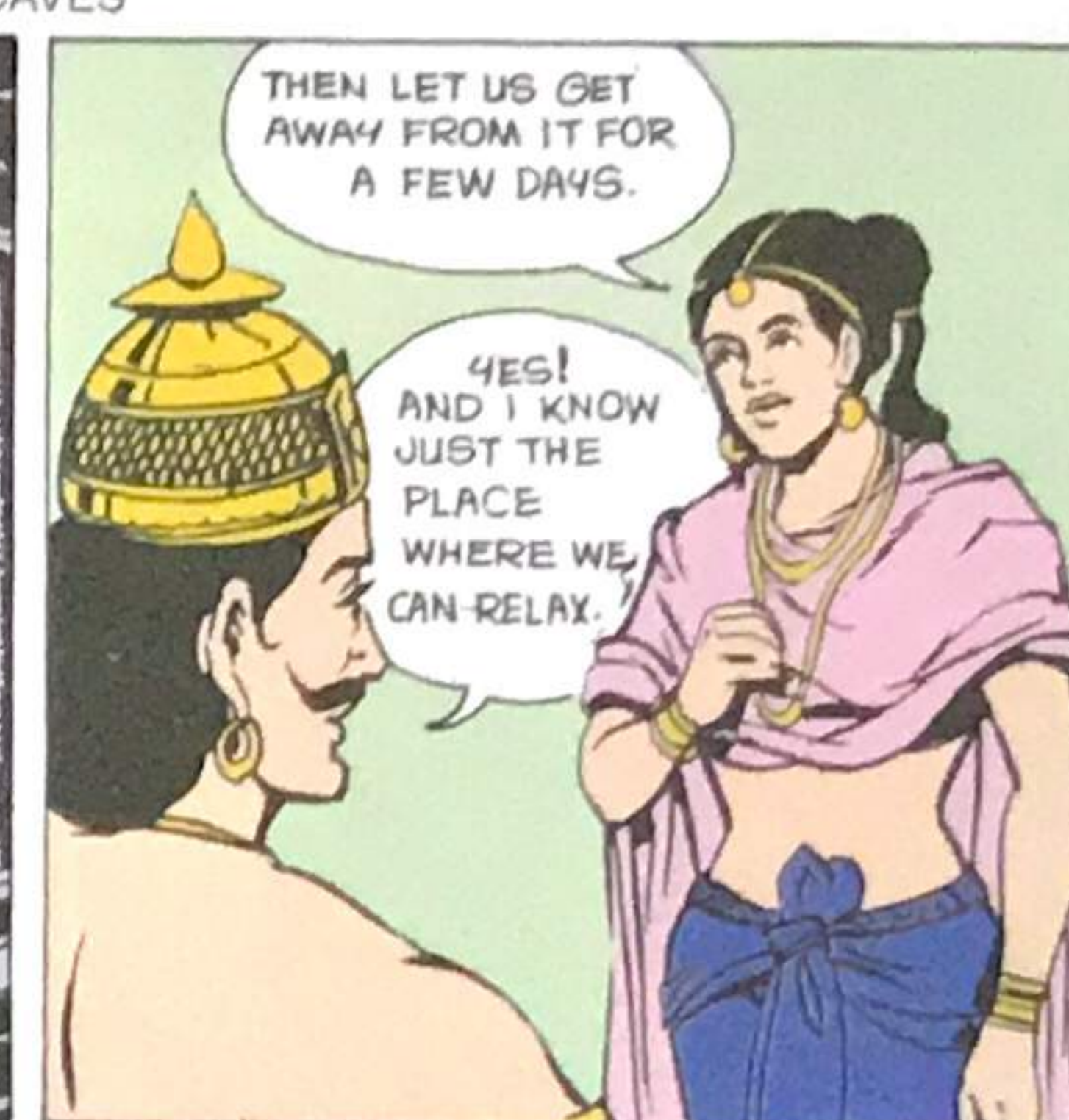
KRISHNA DEVOTED HIMSELF WHOLLY TO RULING THE COUNTRY.



ONE DAY —

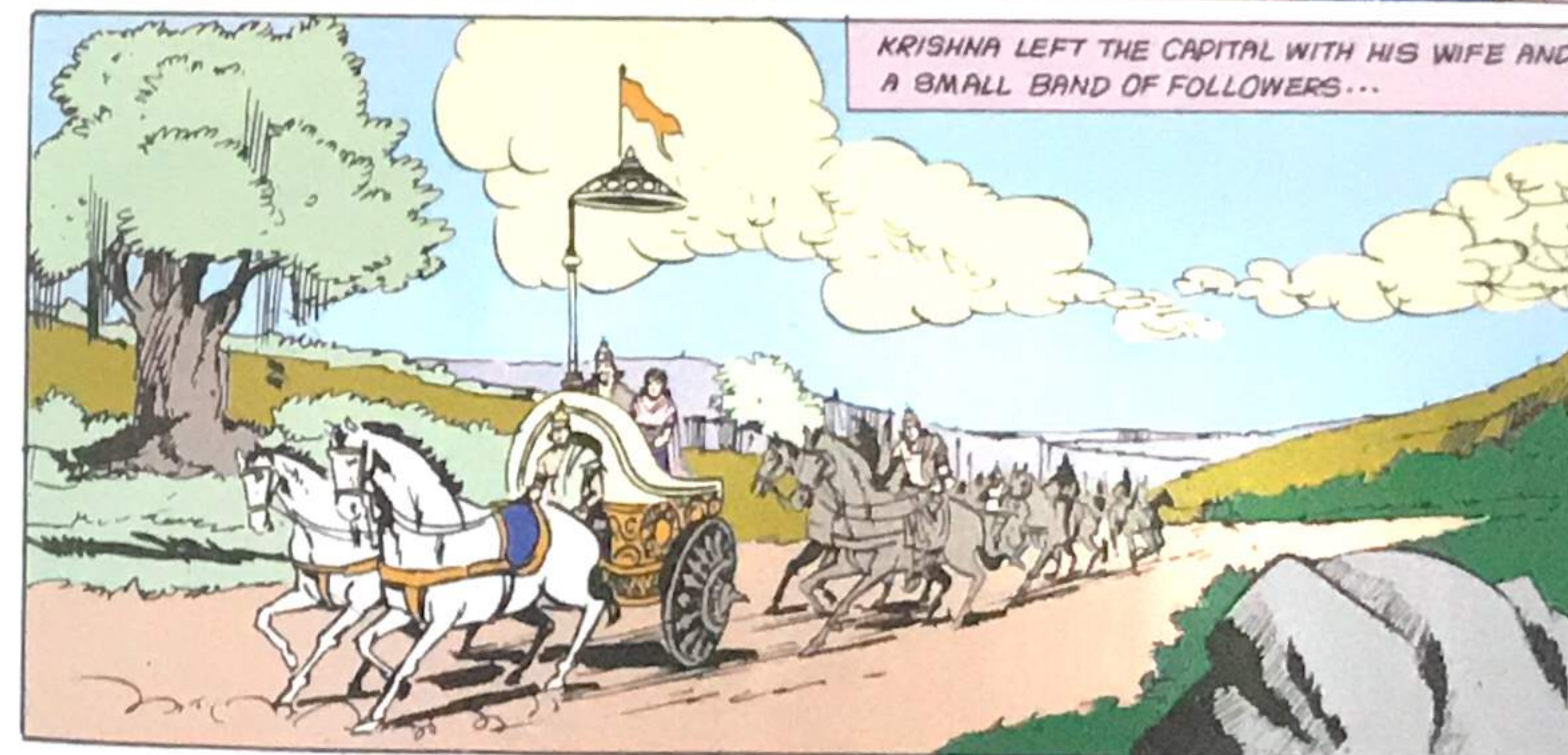
YOU SEEM TIRED, HUSBAND.

YES, THE AFFAIRS OF STATE ARE VERY TAXING.



THEN LET US GET AWAY FROM IT FOR A FEW DAYS.

YES! AND I KNOW JUST THE PLACE WHERE WE CAN RELAX.



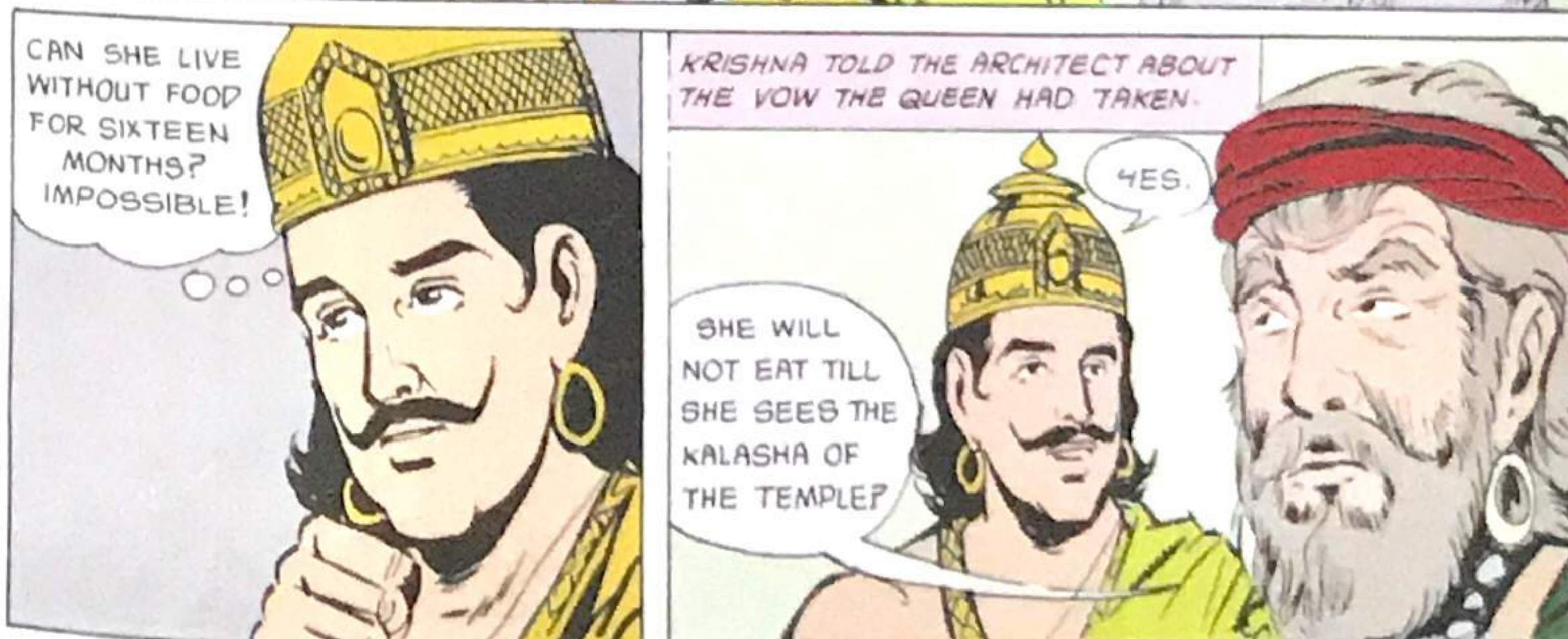
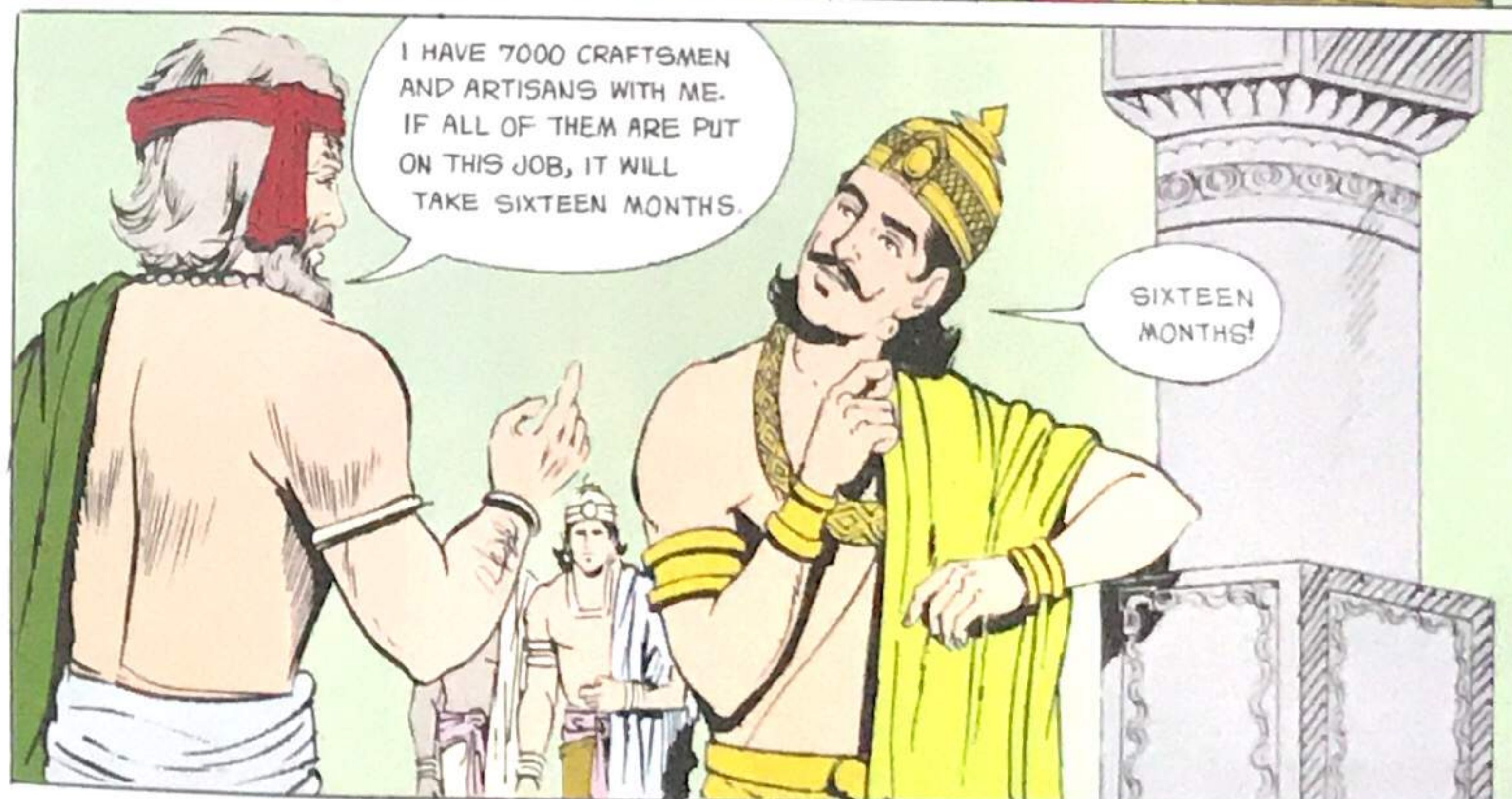
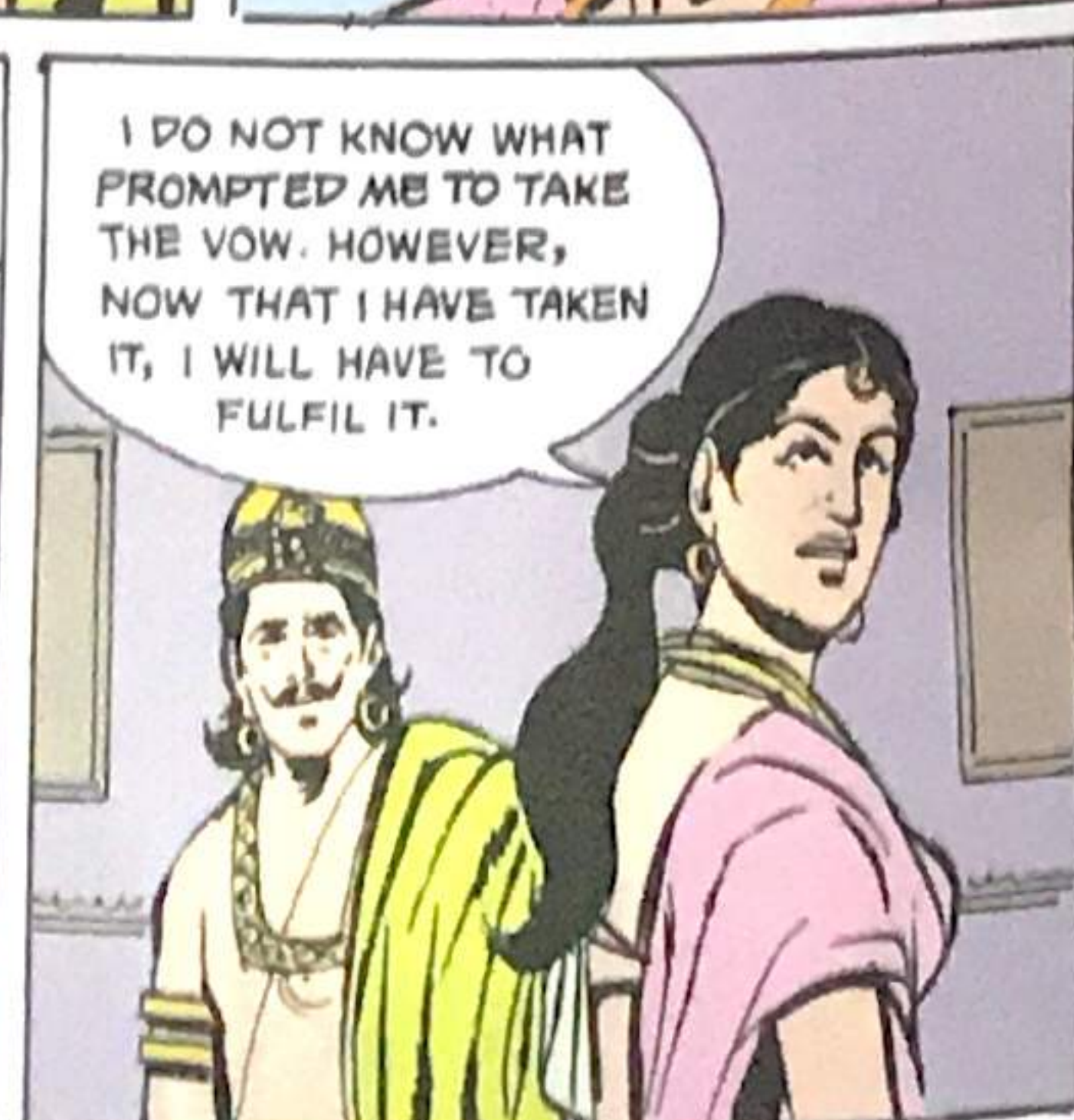
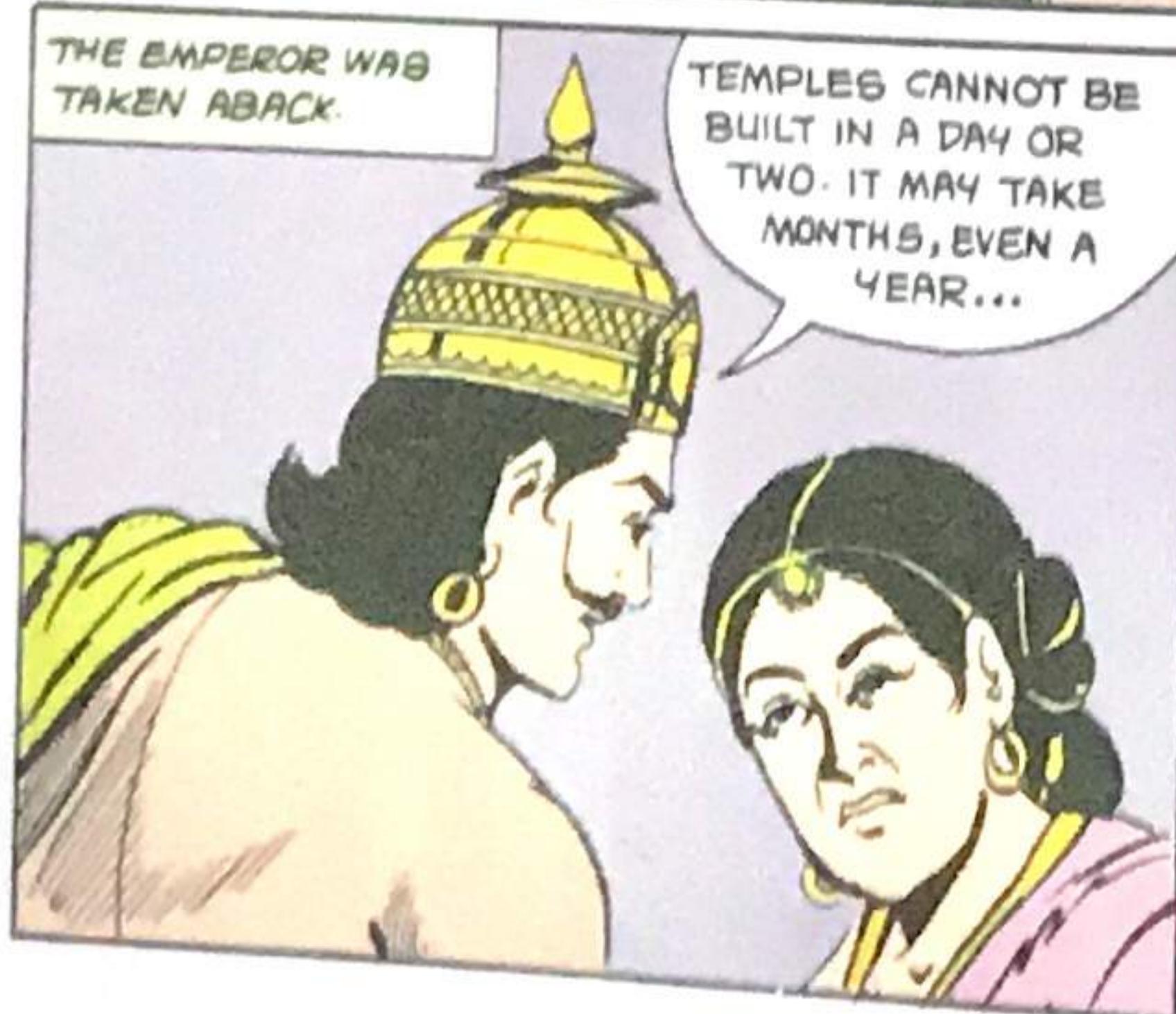
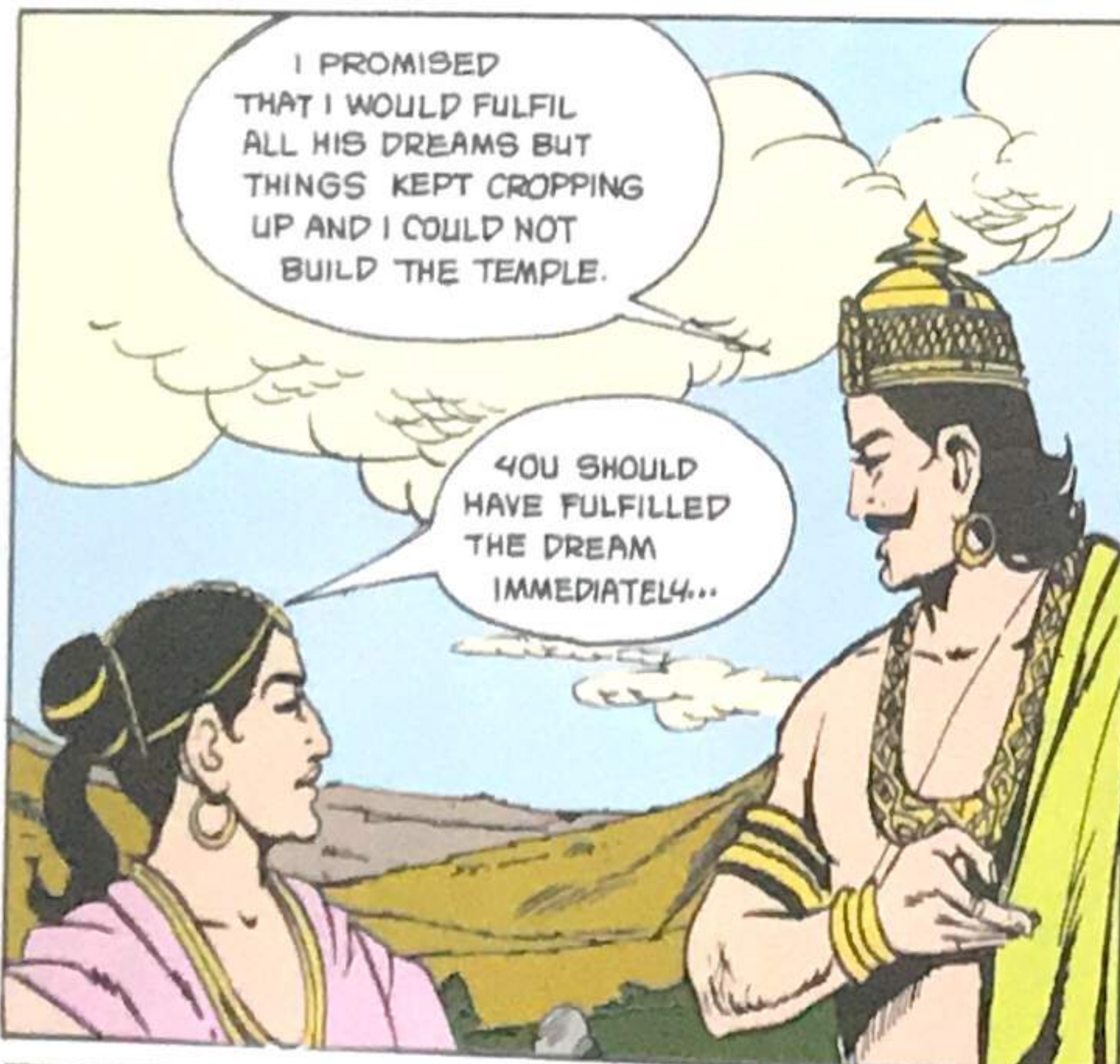
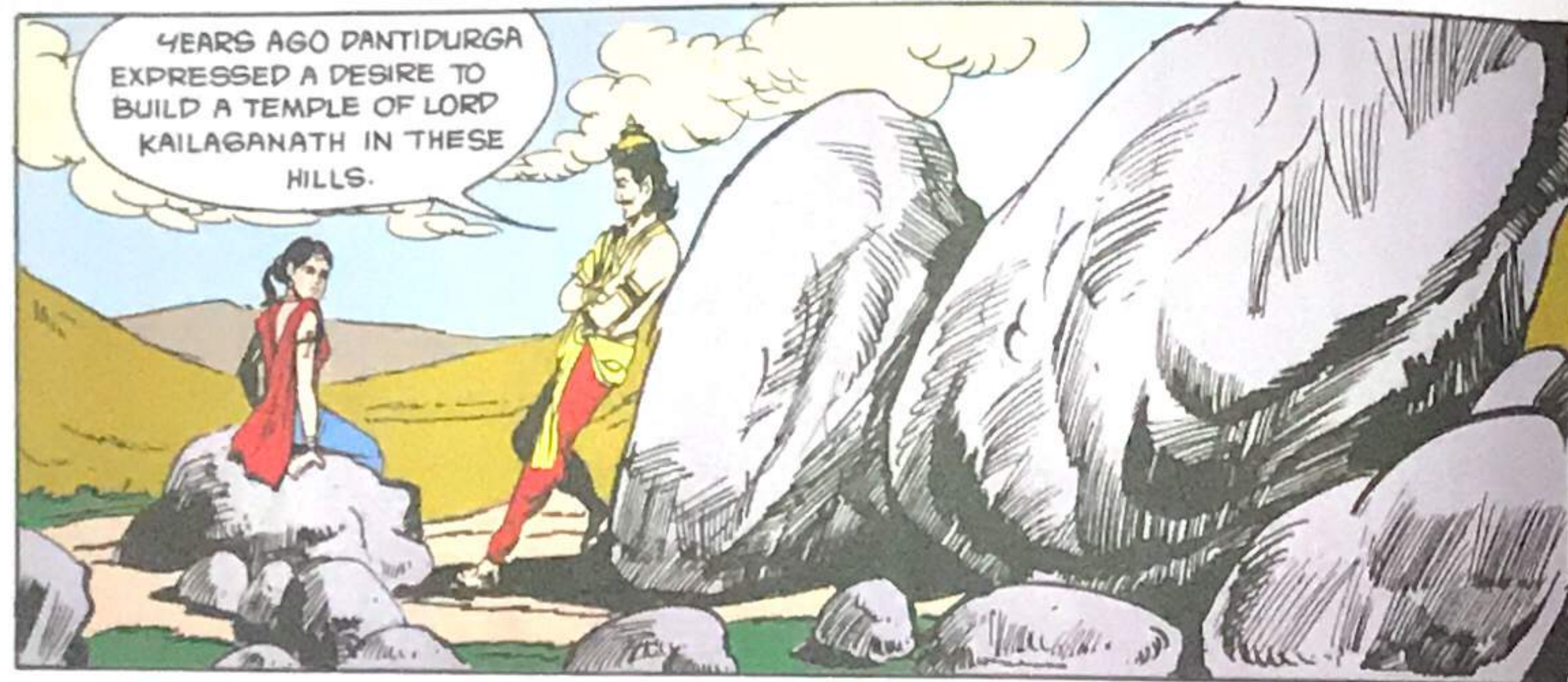
KRISHNA LEFT THE CAPITAL WITH HIS WIFE AND A SMALL BAND OF FOLLOWERS...



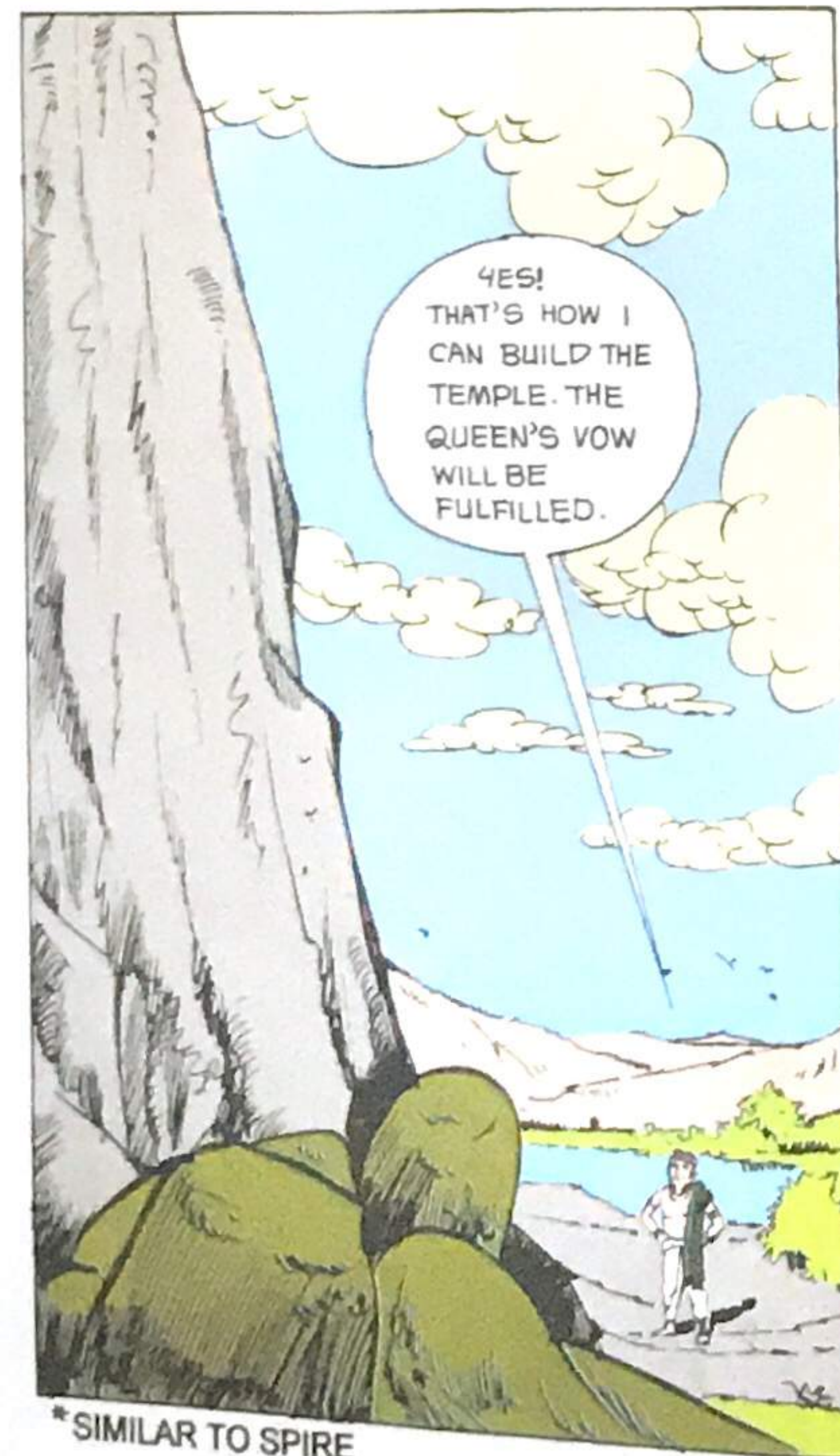
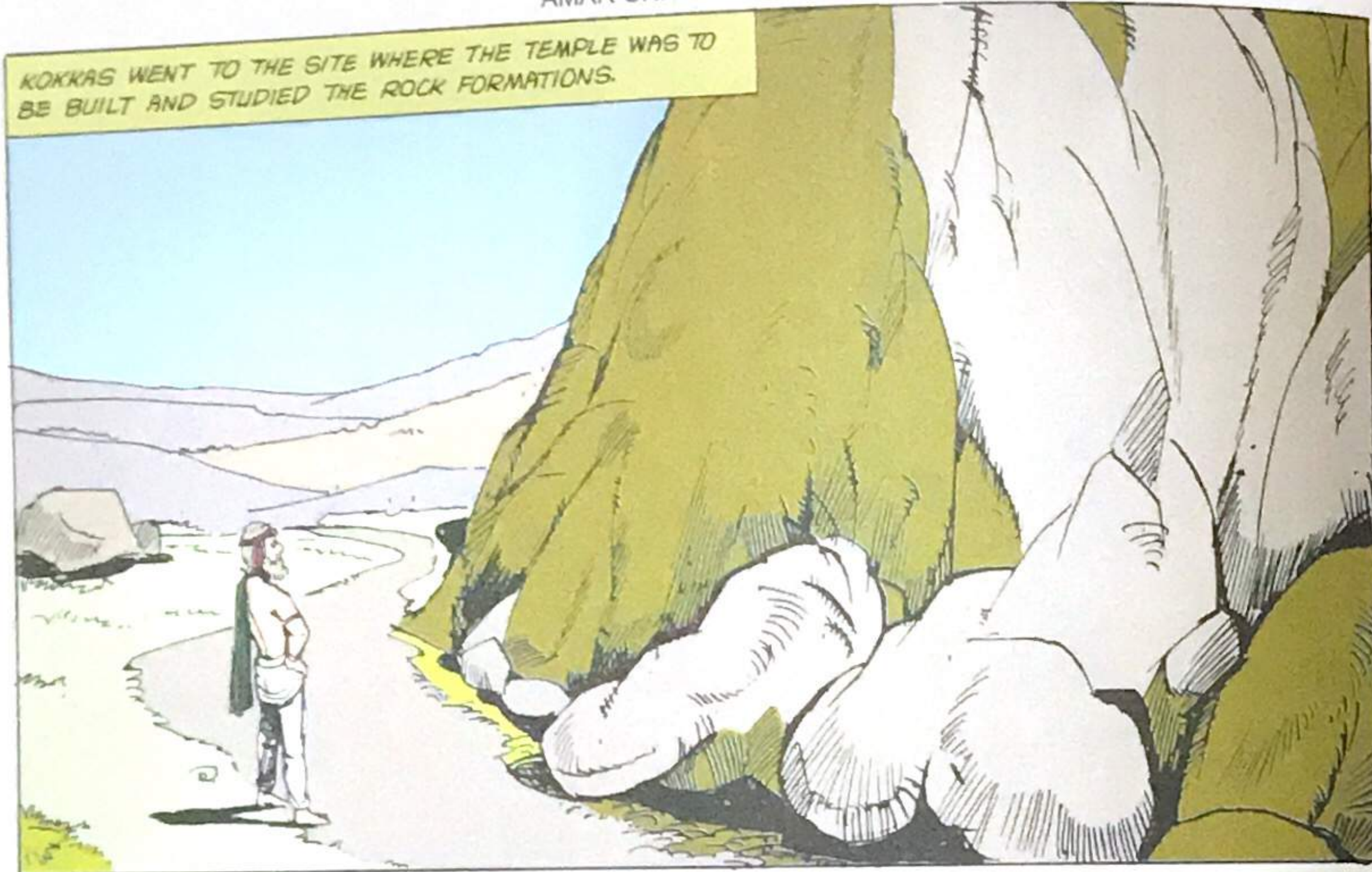
AND CAME TO ELLORA —

WHAT A SERENE PLACE THIS IS!

YES! I TOO FEEL SO.

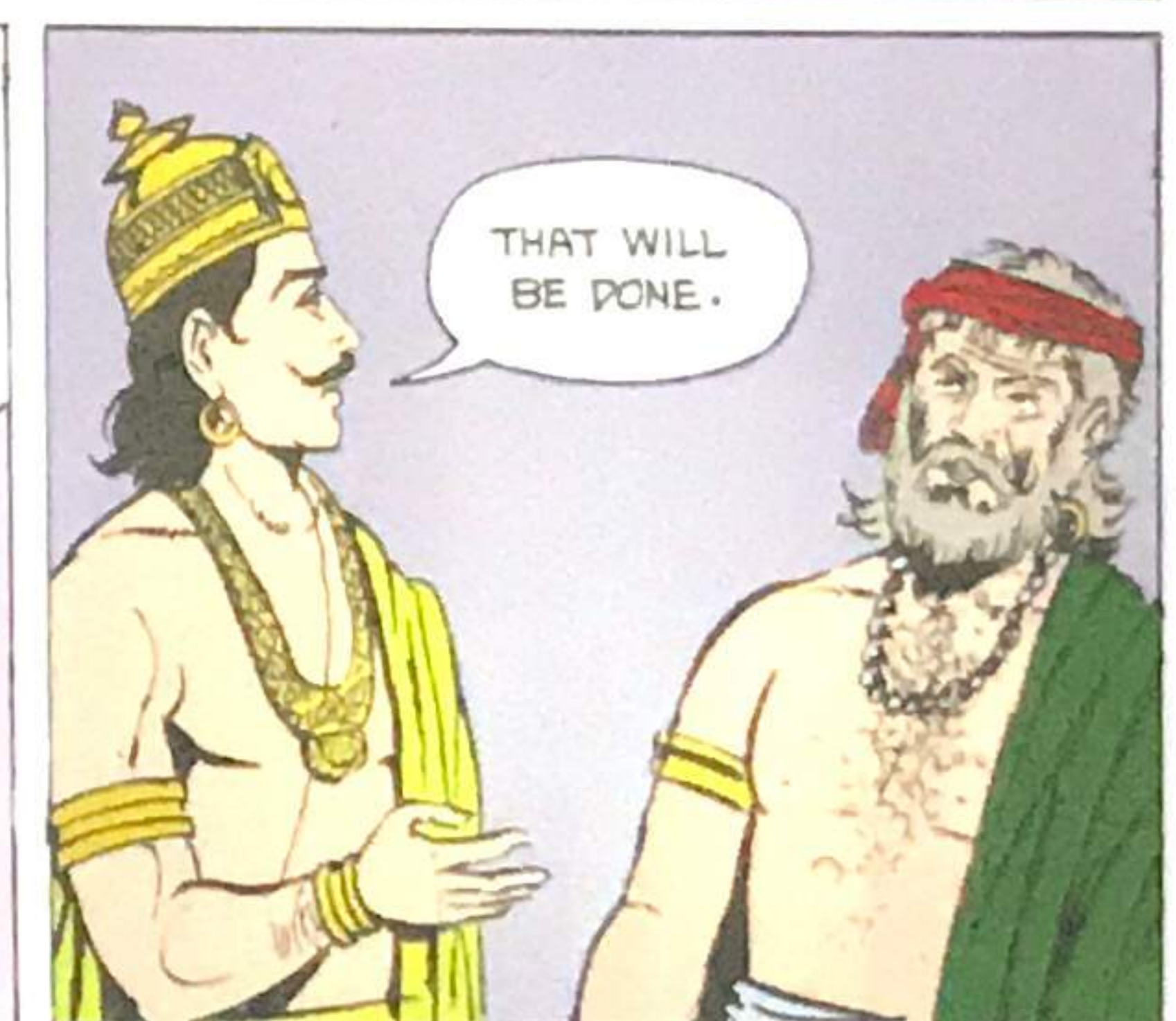
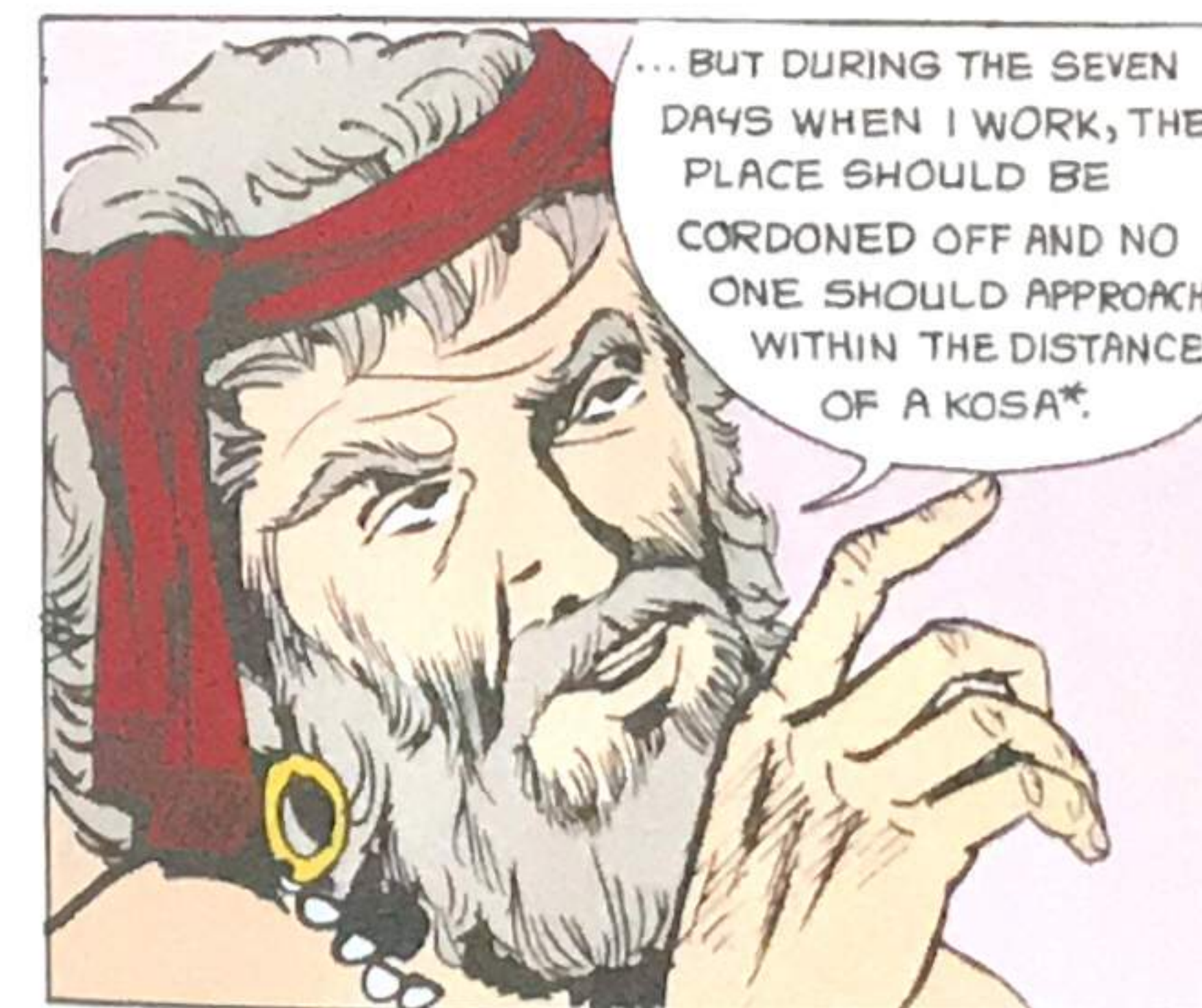
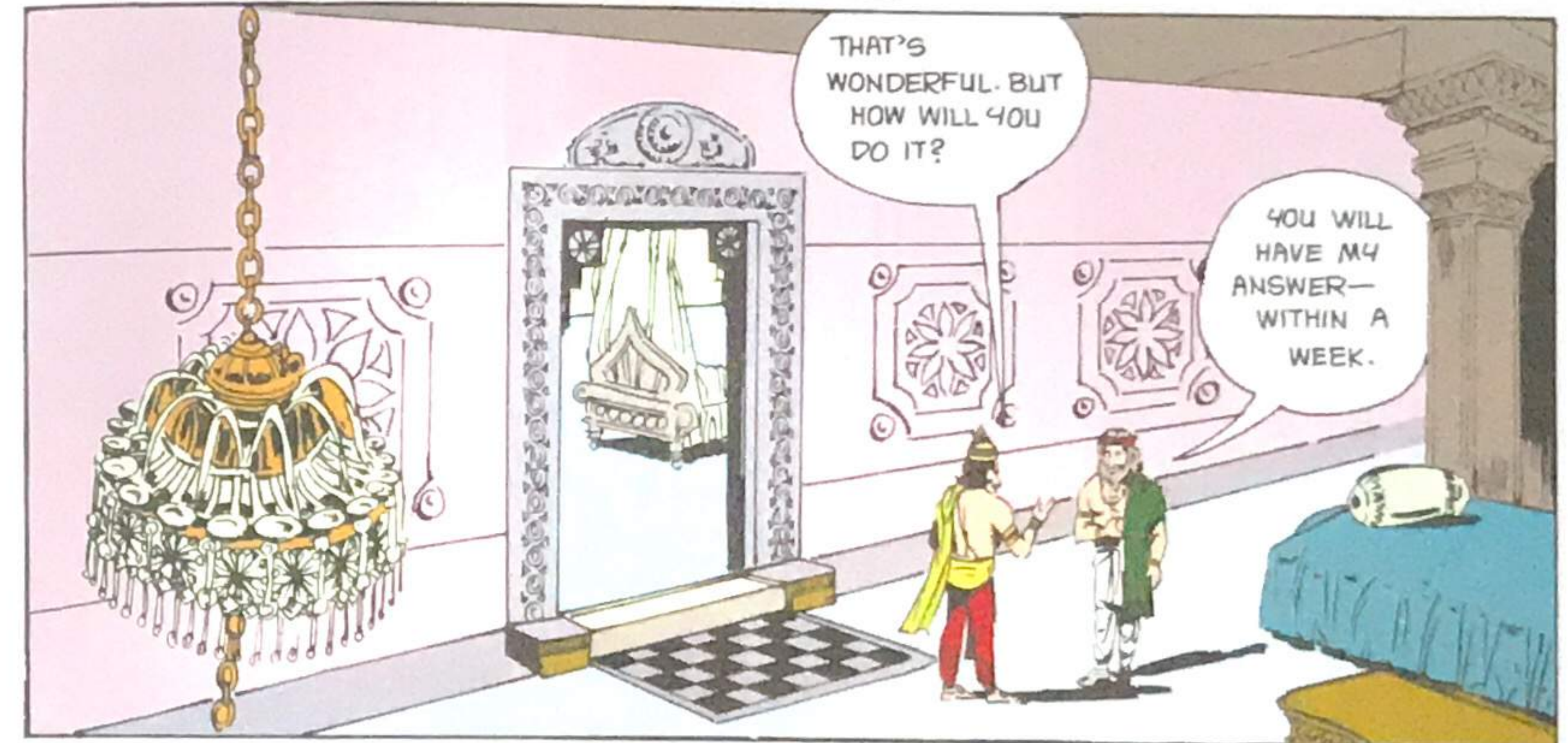
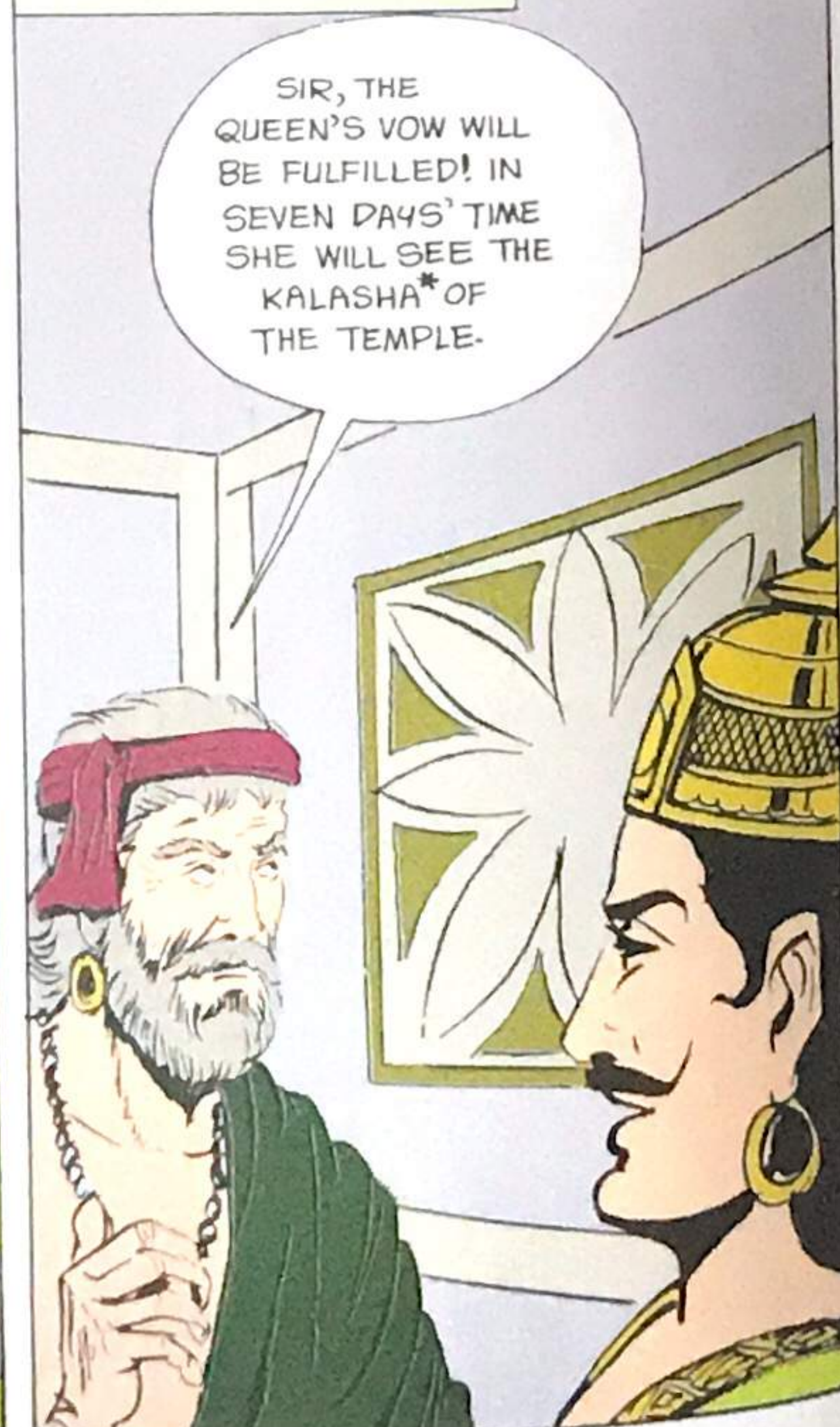


KOKKAS WENT TO THE SITE WHERE THE TEMPLE WAS TO BE BUILT AND STUDIED THE ROCK FORMATIONS.

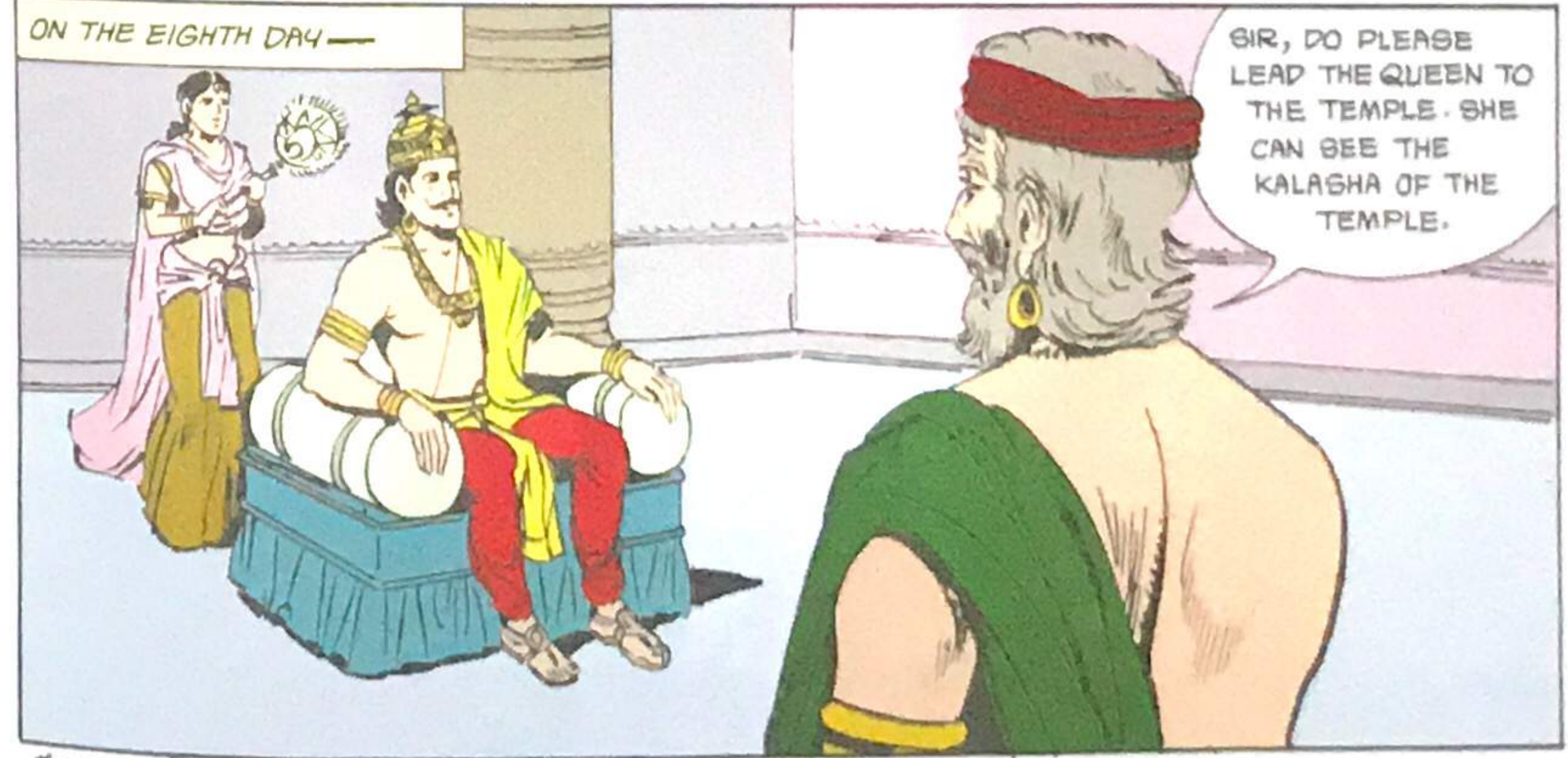


*SIMILAR TO SPIRE

AS THE KING ANXIOUSLY WAITED FOR THE SCULPTOR THE NEXT DAY—

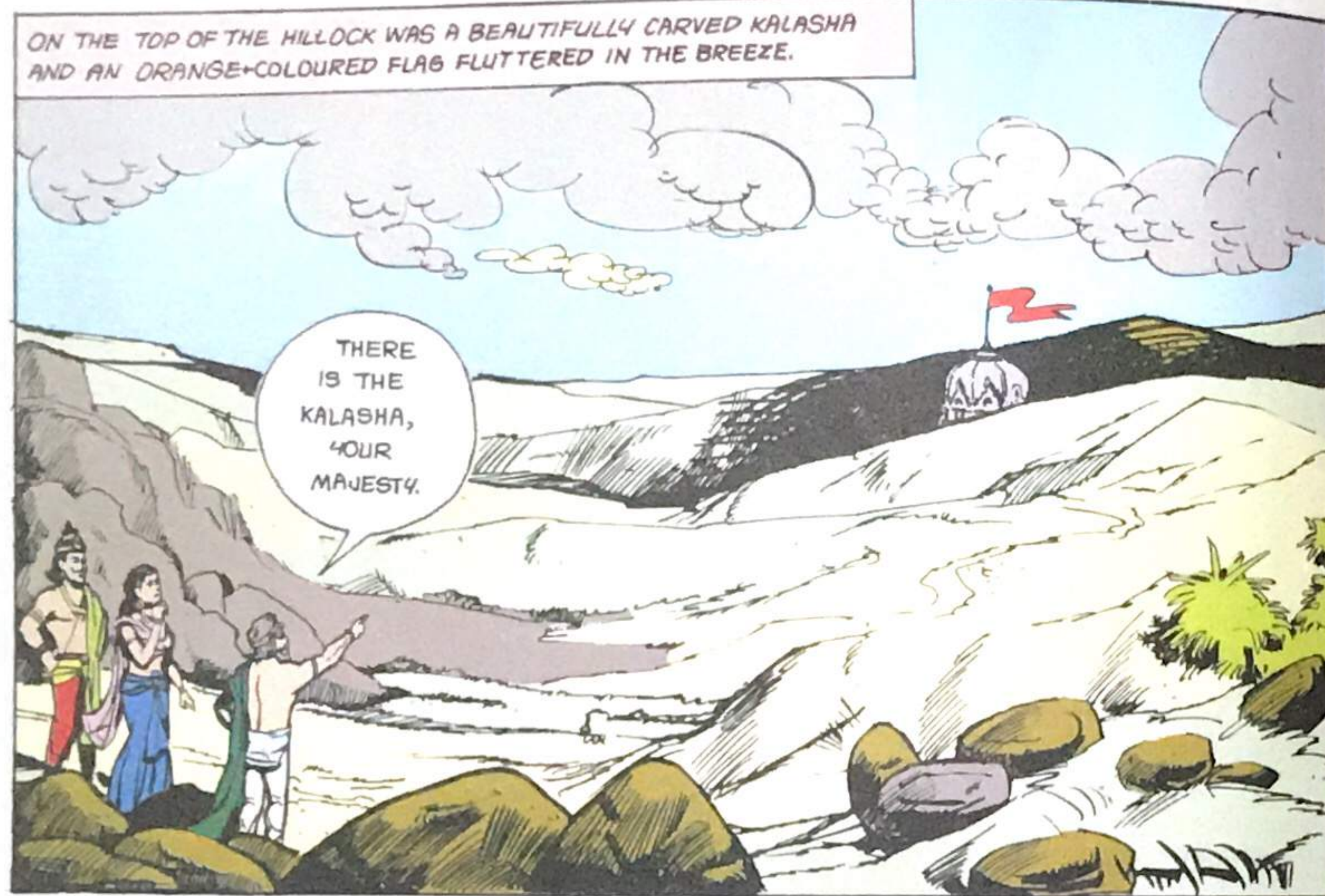


ON THE EIGHTH DAY—

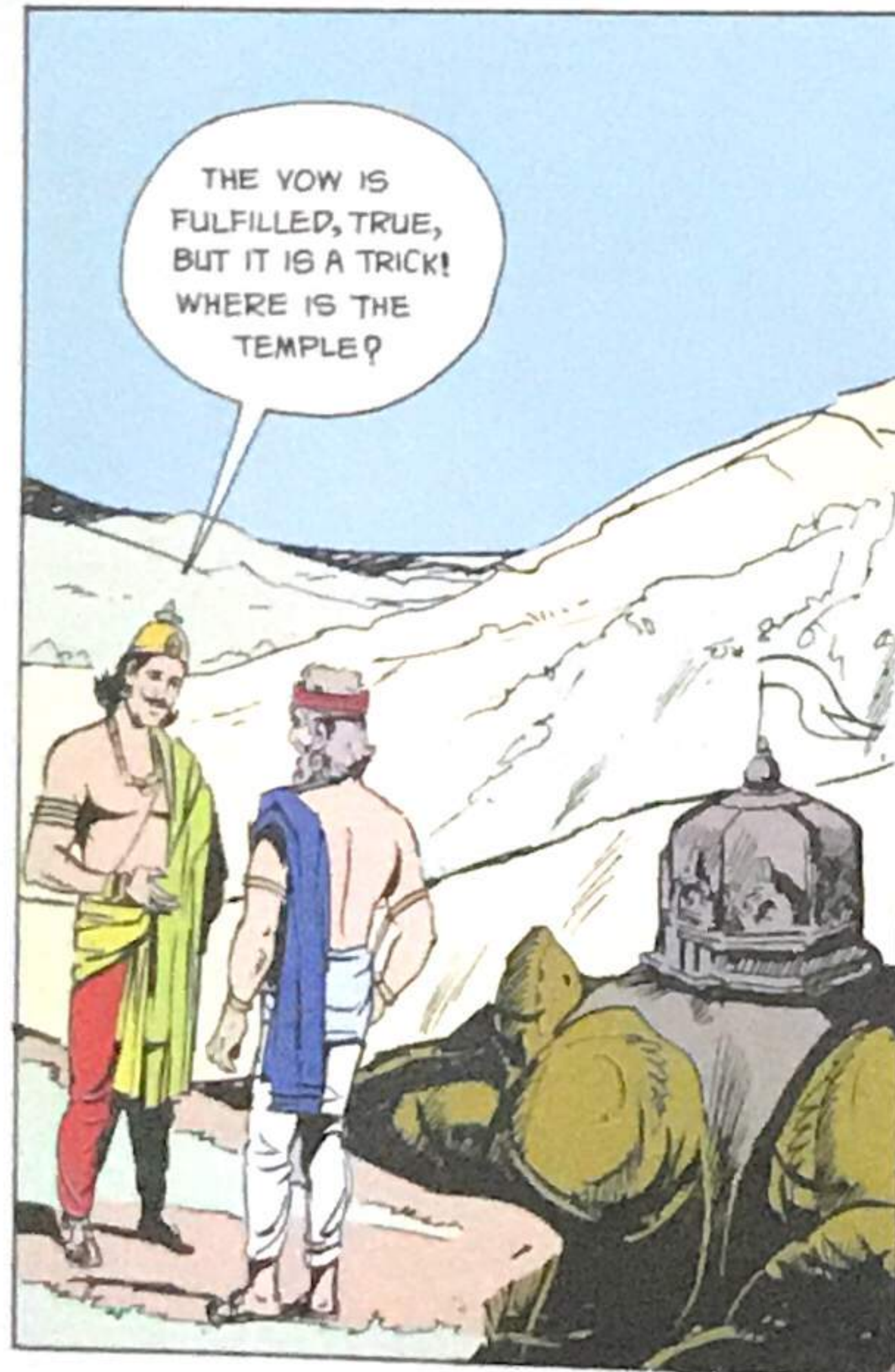


*ABOUT 3.5K.M.

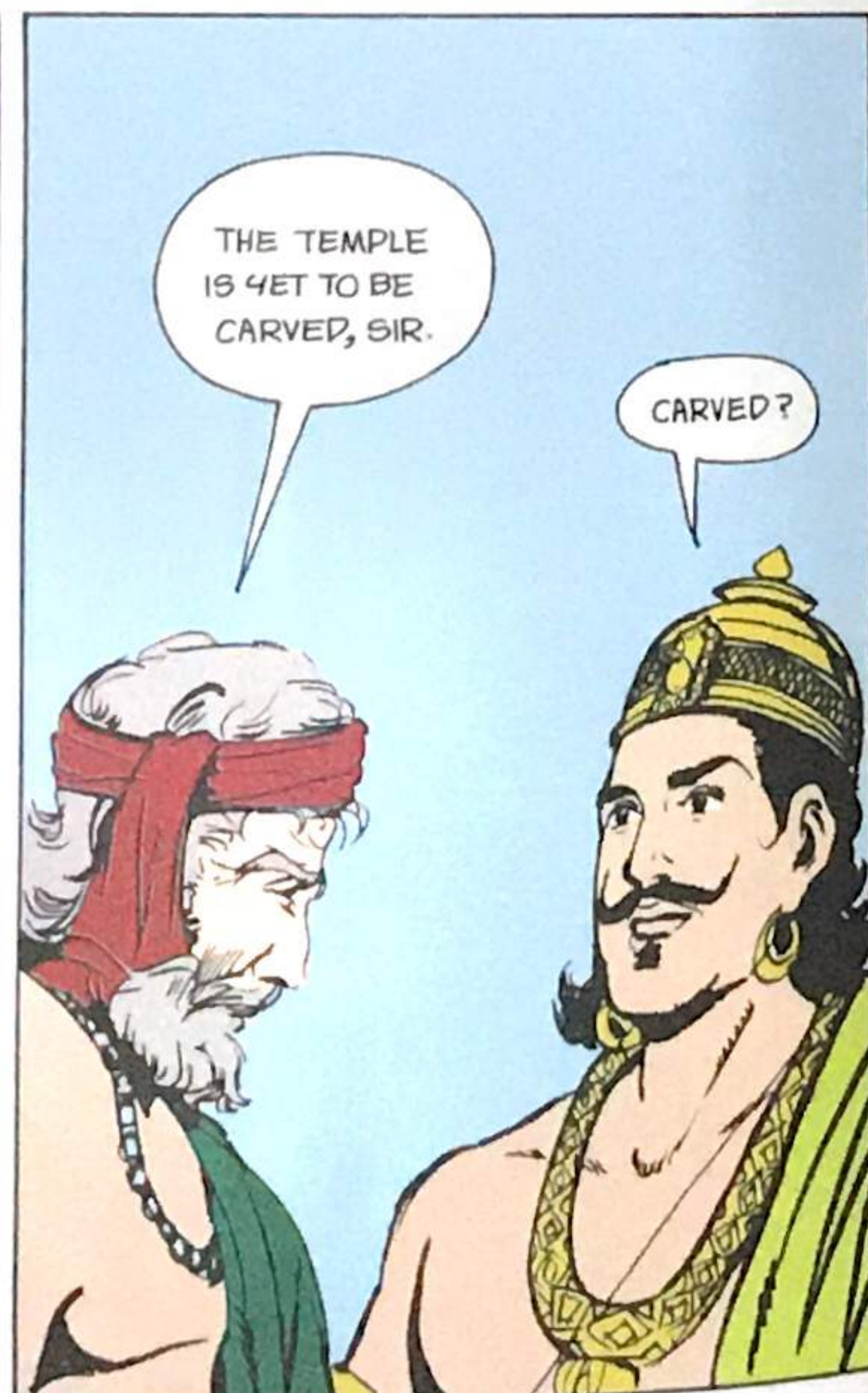
ON THE TOP OF THE HILLOCK WAS A BEAUTIFULLY CARVED KALASHA AND AN ORANGE-COLOURED FLAG FLUTTERED IN THE BREEZE.



THERE IS THE KALASHA, YOUR MAJESTY.



THE VOW IS FULFILLED, TRUE, BUT IT IS A TRICK! WHERE IS THE TEMPLE?

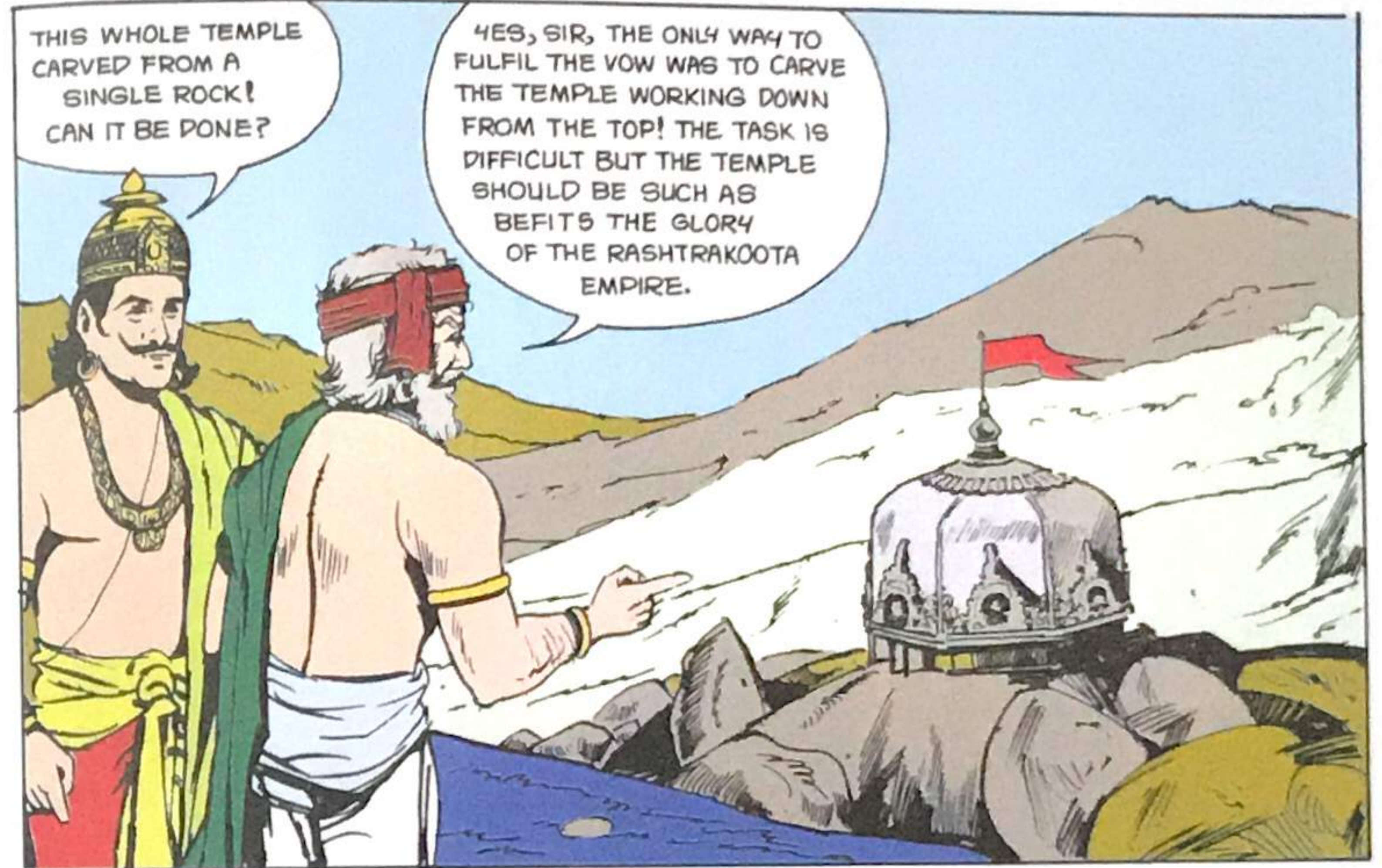


THE TEMPLE IS YET TO BE CARVED, SIR.

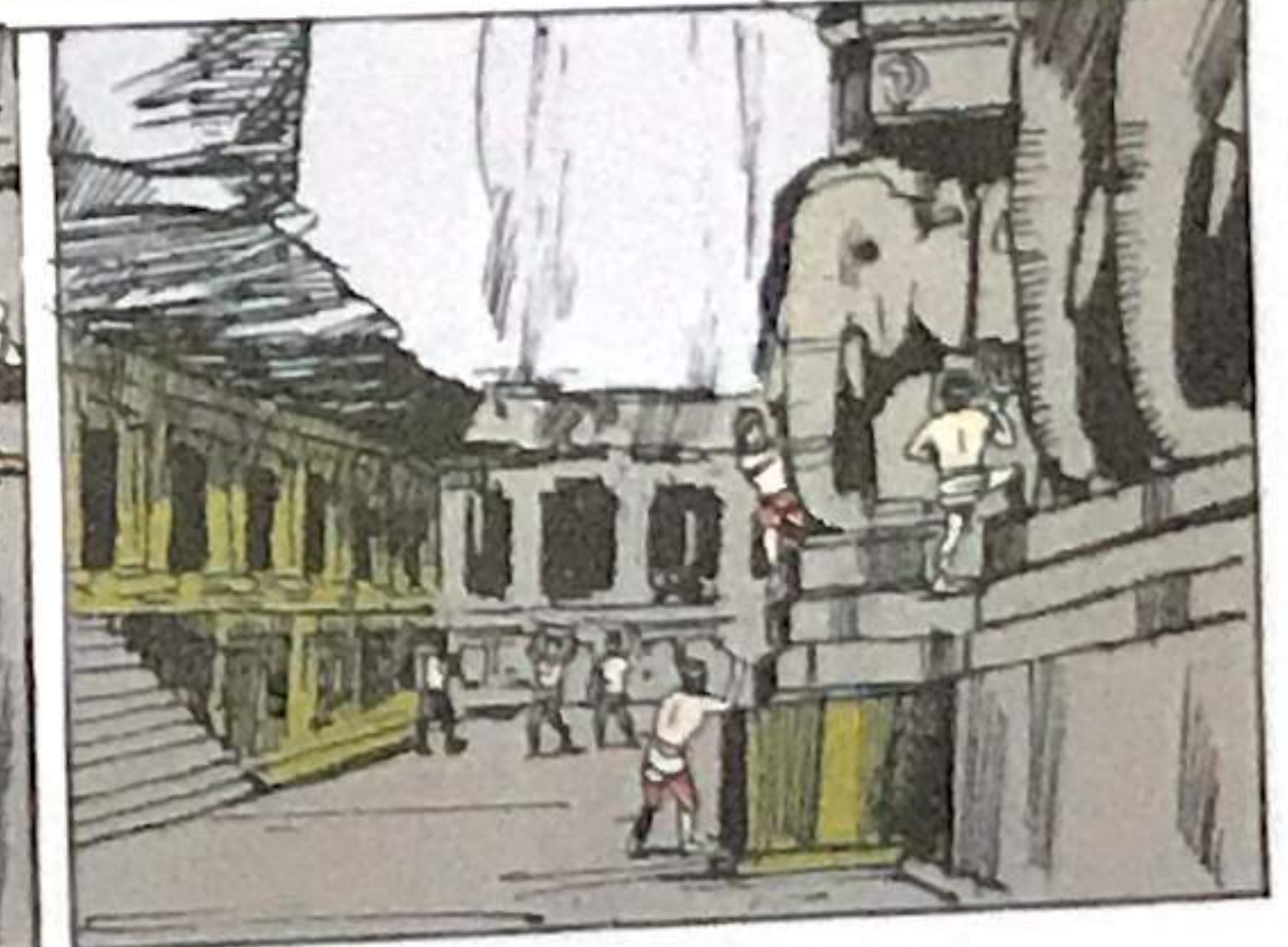
CARVED?

THIS WHOLE TEMPLE CARVED FROM A SINGLE ROCK! CAN IT BE DONE?

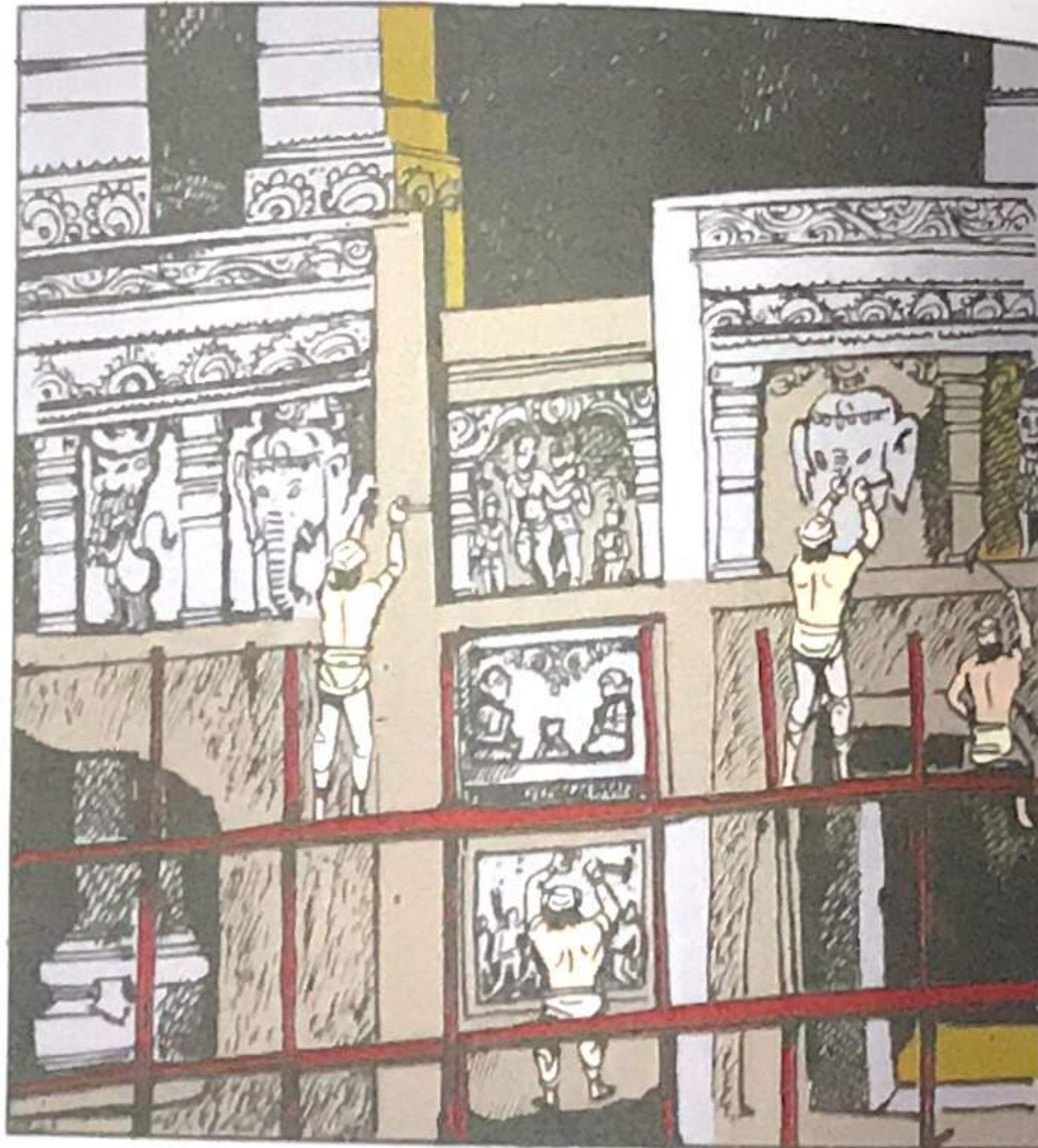
YES, SIR, THE ONLY WAY TO FULFIL THE VOW WAS TO CARVE THE TEMPLE WORKING DOWN FROM THE TOP! THE TASK IS DIFFICULT BUT THE TEMPLE SHOULD BE SUCH AS BEFITS THE GLORY OF THE RASHTRAKOOTA EMPIRE.



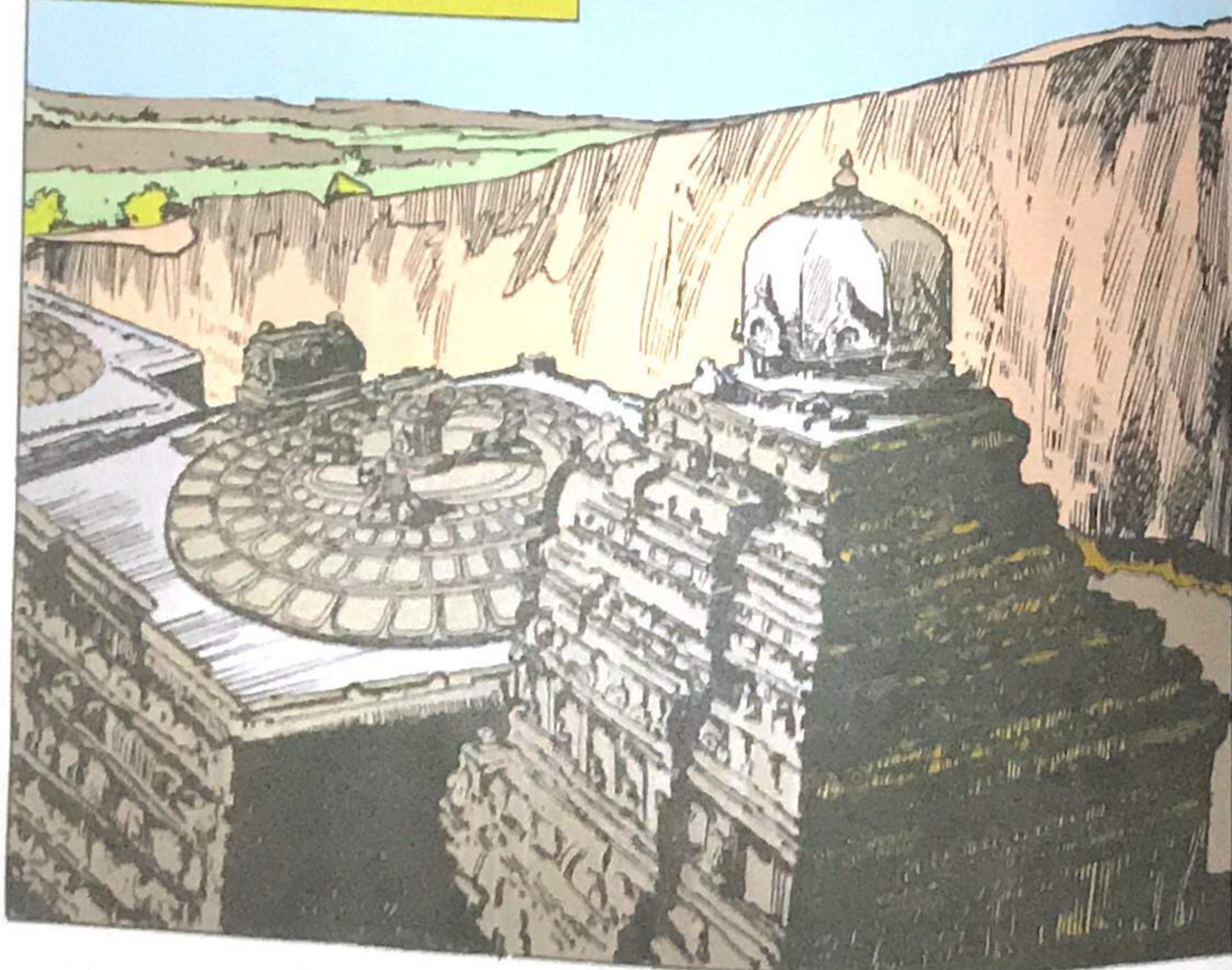
KOKKAS WITH HIS SEVEN THOUSAND ARTISANS SET ABOUT TO BUILD THE KAILASANATH TEMPLE—



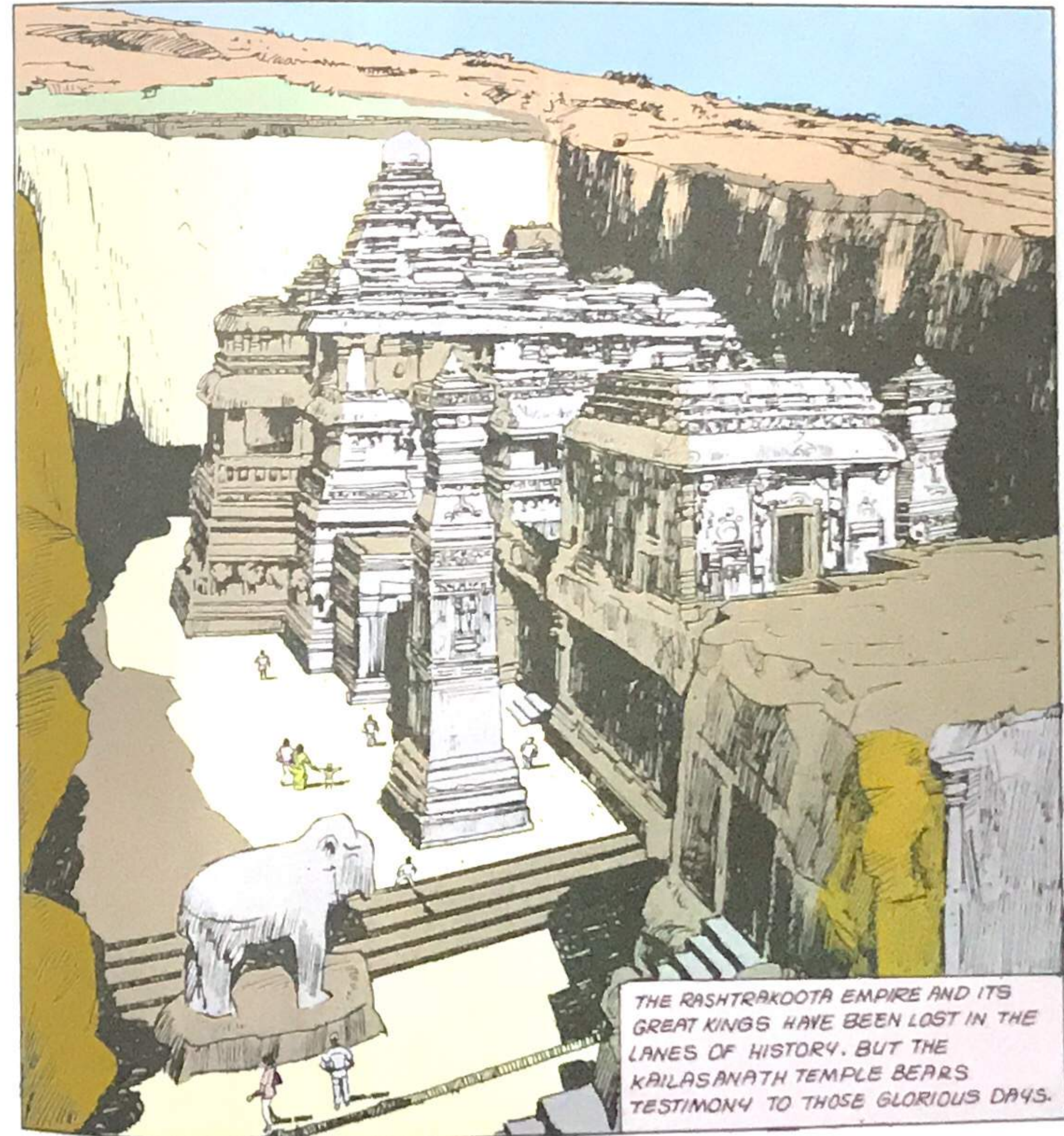
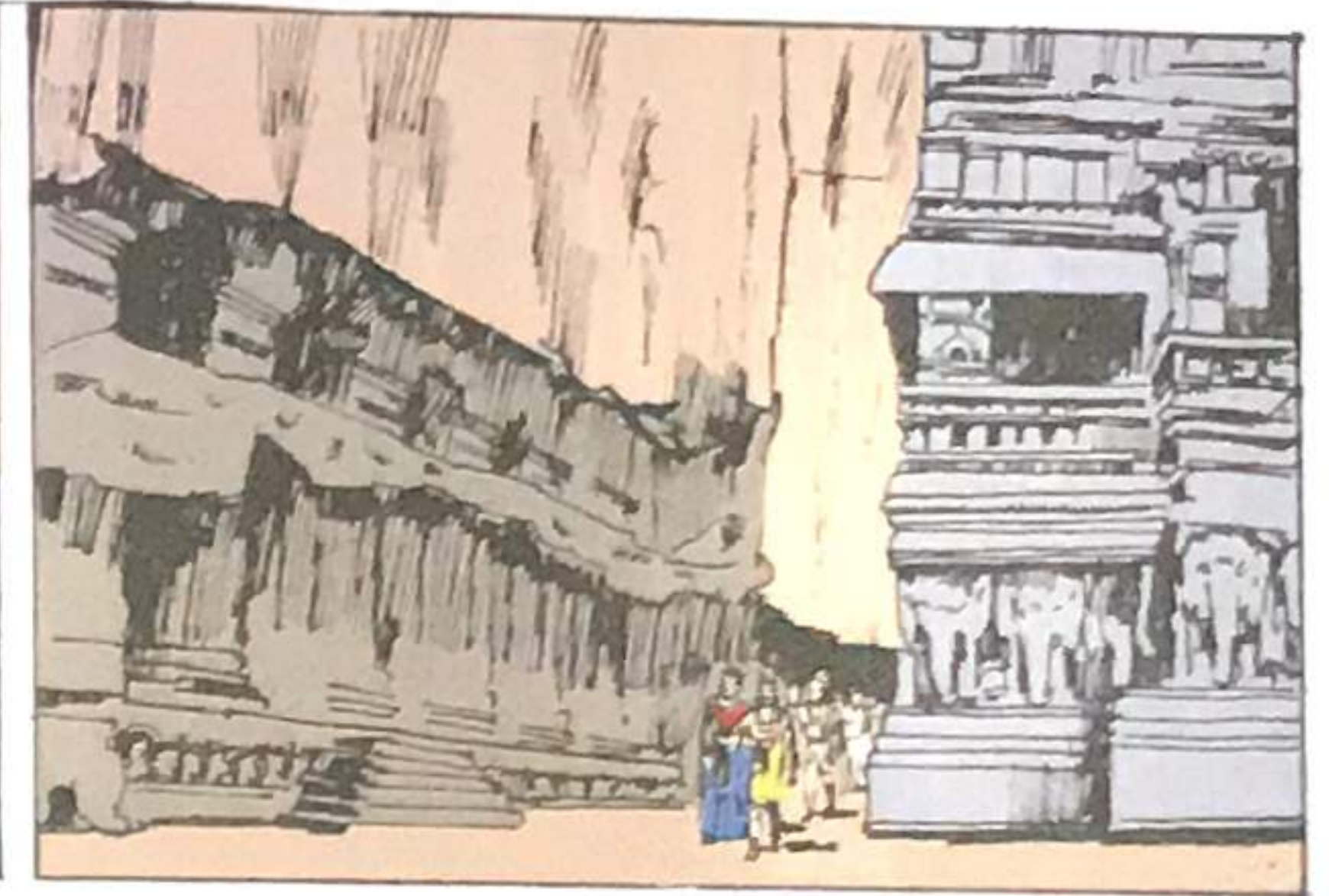
THE KING CAME FREQUENTLY TO SEE THE PROGRESS OF THE WORK —



IN DUE COURSE THE TEMPLE TOOK SHAPE.



THE CONSECRATION OF THE TEMPLE WAS PERFORMED WITH APPROPRIATE RITES.



THE RASHTRAKOOTA EMPIRE AND ITS GREAT KINGS HAVE BEEN LOST IN THE LANES OF HISTORY. BUT THE KAILASANATH TEMPLE BEARS TESTIMONY TO THOSE GLORIOUS DAYS.